

ALABAMA ADULT EDUCATION AND FAMILY LITERACY PLAN

July 1, 2008 through June 30, 2009

**Approved by the Secretary
U.S. Department of Education
In Accordance With the Adult Education and Family Literacy Act,
Title II, Workforce Investment Act of 1998, P.L. 105-220**

Effective July 1, 2008

for collecting the measures, reporting forms and procedures, and training and technical assistance activities to assist states in collecting the measures. The final NRS guidelines may be accessed at <http://www.air-dc.org/nrs/default.htm>.

- ~~ee.~~ **Other Literacy Skills:** For the purposes of this plan, other literacy skills are those skills that are appropriate for adult students, compliment the literacy segment, and enhance an individual's ability to function in life, on the job, and in society.
- ff. **Phonics:** For the purposes of this plan, phonics is a reading program with the methodology of teaching adults to read by looking at a written word, recognizing its letters, attaching speech sounds to them, blending sounds together, and finally pronouncing the word.
- gg. **Plan of Instruction (POI):** A plan of instruction (POI) shall be developed on each adult student for the purposes of identifying each objective and/or skill for which each student has achieved non- and partial-mastery based on the results of a properly administered assessment instrument. These objectives and/or skills shall guide the instruction process. The POI must incorporate the following elements:
1. Student's name.
 2. Assessment instrument administered, to include date and placement.
 3. Objectives/skills the student has not mastered.
 4. Learning resources assigned to the student to teach or remediate the objectives/skills to be mastered; include chapter and page number.
 5. Date instruction began on each objective/skill to be mastered.
 6. Date student mastered each identified objective/skill.
 7. Method used to determine mastery on objective/skill.
- hh. **Postsecondary Educational Institution:** An institution of higher education that provides not less than a two-year program of instruction that is acceptable for credit toward a bachelor's degree, or a tribally controlled community college, or a nonprofit educational institution offering certificate or apprenticeship programs at the postsecondary level.
- ii. **Problem-Solving Instruction:** For the purposes of this plan, problem-solving is a needed life skill. It is also a process the student can apply to help solve the problems they encounter. Problem-solving instruction teaches students the skills and methods needed to successfully apply problem-solving techniques.
- jj. **Student Placement Level (SPL):** A set of skills and competencies, as determined by a properly administered assessment instrument, that adult students who speak English as second language can do.
- kk. **Transition Programs:** Instruction specifically designed to prepare adult students to enter postsecondary education, higher education, training programs and to improve their employability.
- ll. **Work Based Project Student Classes:** Short-term classes of at least 12 hours but no more than thirty hours designed to teach specific work-based skills. Particular emphasis will be placed on workplace academic and employability skills.
- mm. **Workplace Literacy Services:** Literacy services that are offered for the purpose of improving the productivity of the workforce through the improvement of literacy skills.

Adult Ed. Cumulative WorkKeys Assessment Report

9/27/07 - 5/9/08

Bevelle

First Name	MI	Last Name	Test Date	AM	LI	RFI	Certificate	Remarks
Jodi	J	Decker	01/28/2008	4	3	5	Bronze	
Michelle	D	Johnson	01/28/2008	<3	<3	4	NO	Less than 3 (AM & LI)
Trena	Y	Lidge	01/28/2008	4	3	3	Bronze	
Nicole	L	Havis	04/03/2008	3	4	5	Bronze	
Carolyn	A	McGee	04/03/2008	4	4	4	Silver	
Cornettis	L	McQueen	04/03/2008	5	<3	4	NO	Less than 3 (LI)
Linda	G	Woodham	04/03/2008	4	4	4	Silver	
Total	Bevelle	7						

Borden

First Name	MI	Last Name	Test Date	AM	LI	RFI	Certificate	Remarks
Adam	D	Poer	09/27/2007	6	5	5	Gold	
Jason	N	Brown	09/28/2007	4	4	6	Silver	
Andrew	C	Brown	10/02/2007	4	4	6	Silver	
Myron		Marable	10/02/2007	4	4	5	Silver	
Total	Borden	4						

Brown

First Name	MI	Last Name	Test Date	AM	LI	RFI	Certificate	Remarks
Ethan	W	Bowman	03/11/2008	3	3	4	Bronze	
Total	Brown	1						

Duff

First Name	MI	Last Name	Test Date	AM	LI	RFI	Certificate	Remarks
Darius	B	Bailey	03/04/2008	<3	3	4	NO	Less than 3 (AM)
Total	Duff	1						

Henry

First Name	MI	Last Name	Test Date	AM	LI	RFI	Certificate	Remarks
Frederick		Woods	02/14/2008	3	4	4	Bronze	
Karima	R	Clark	02/15/2008	5	5	5	Gold	

Adult Ed. Cumulative WorkKeys Assessment Report

9/27/07 - 5/9/08

Jacqueline	D	Carter	02/28/2008	4	4	4	Silver	
Lois	M	Lopez	05/09/2008	4	3	4	Bronze	
Total	Henry	4						

Howard

First Name	MI	Last Name	Test Date	AM	LI	RFI	Certificate	Remarks
Alexandria	M	Sanger	02/01/2008	4	4	5	Silver	
Eric	D	Fuller	02/07/2008	4	3	5	Bronze	
Kristen	N	Kattalia	02/07/2008	3	4	4	Bronze	
Toni	J	Williams	04/10/2008	5	4	6	Silver	
William	D	Morrow	11/29/2007	5	5	6	Gold	
Total	Howard	5						

Rappe

First Name	MI	Last Name	Test Date	AM	LI	RFI	Certificate	Remarks
Janay	O	Smith	02/11/2008	3	3	4	Bronze	
Heather	L	Madden	02/20/2008	5	4	4	Silver	
Deandrea	J	Johnson	02/28/2008	4	<3	5	NO	Less than 3 (LI)
Chris	L	VanHauen	03/11/2008	3	4	4	Bronze	
Terry	W	Cromer	04/01/2008	5	<3	<3	NO	Less than 3(LI & RFI)
Joshua	L	Dodd	04/01/2008	3	4	4	Bronze	
Total	Rappe	6						

Rumley

First Name	MI	Last Name	Test Date	AM	LI	RFI	Certificate	Remarks
Amber	R	McGriff	05/06/2008	3	3	3	Bronze	
Total	Rumley	1						

Wolfe

First Name	MI	Last Name	Test Date	AM	LI	RFI	Certificate	Remarks
Damien	L	Bell	02/12/2008	3	4	5	Bronze	
Jesse	D	Grissett	02/12/2008	4	4	4	Silver	
Qunitarius	B	Young	02/19/2008	5	3	4	Bronze	
Demetrius	D	Alvis	03/06/2008	5	4	5	Silver	

Adult Ed. Cumulative WorkKeys Assessment Report

9/27/07 - 5/9/08

Thelma	R	Craig	03/13/2008	4	<3	4	NO	Less than 3 (LI)
Calnesha	C	Dorsey	03/13/2008	3	3	5	Bronze	
Brittney	D	Johnson	04/01/2008	3	4	4	Bronze	
DeAndre	R	Lee	04/10/2008	<3	<3	<3	NO	Less than 3 (AM, LI, and RFI)
Anthony	M	Dokes	04/22/2008	4	<3	4	NO	Less than 3 (LI)
Demetric	D	Rayford	04/22/2008	6	4	4	Silver	
Kayla	E	Mays	11/26/2007	5	4	6	Silver	
Nekia	S	McKinney	11/28/2007	<3	no	4	NO	Less than 3 (AM), Did not take LI test
Simon		Miller	11/28/2007	3	<3	no	NO	Less than 3 (LI), Did not take RFI test
Total Wolfe		13						

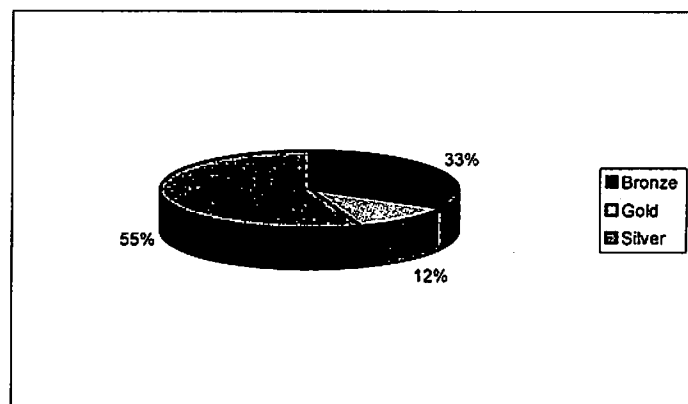
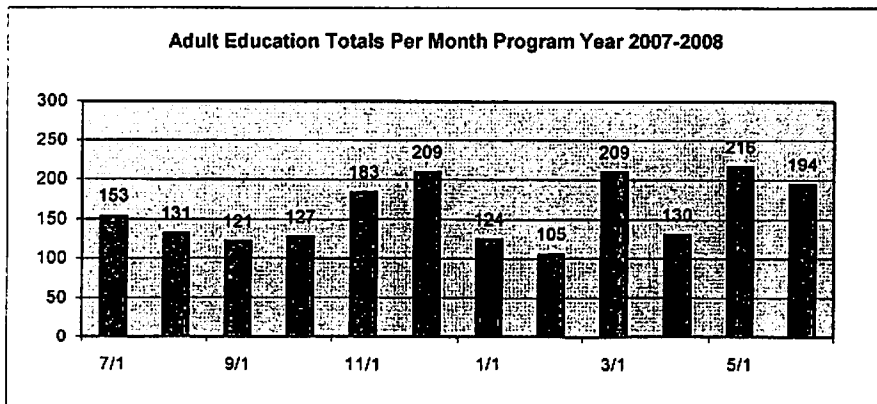
Total Students Tested 42

Total Did Not Receive a Certificate - See Remarks 10

Prepared By: Dorothy Henry

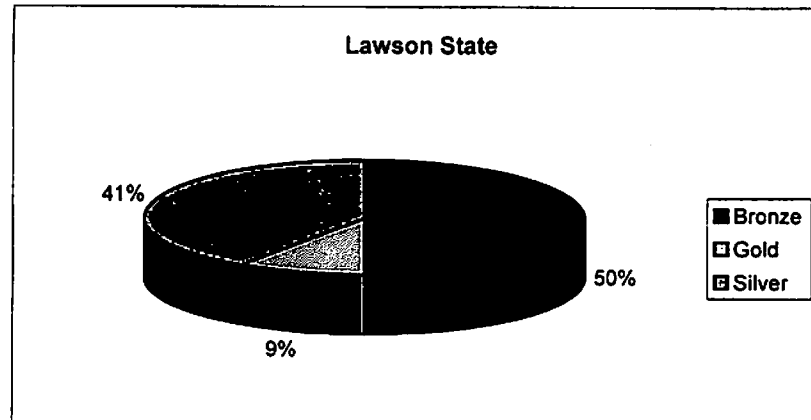
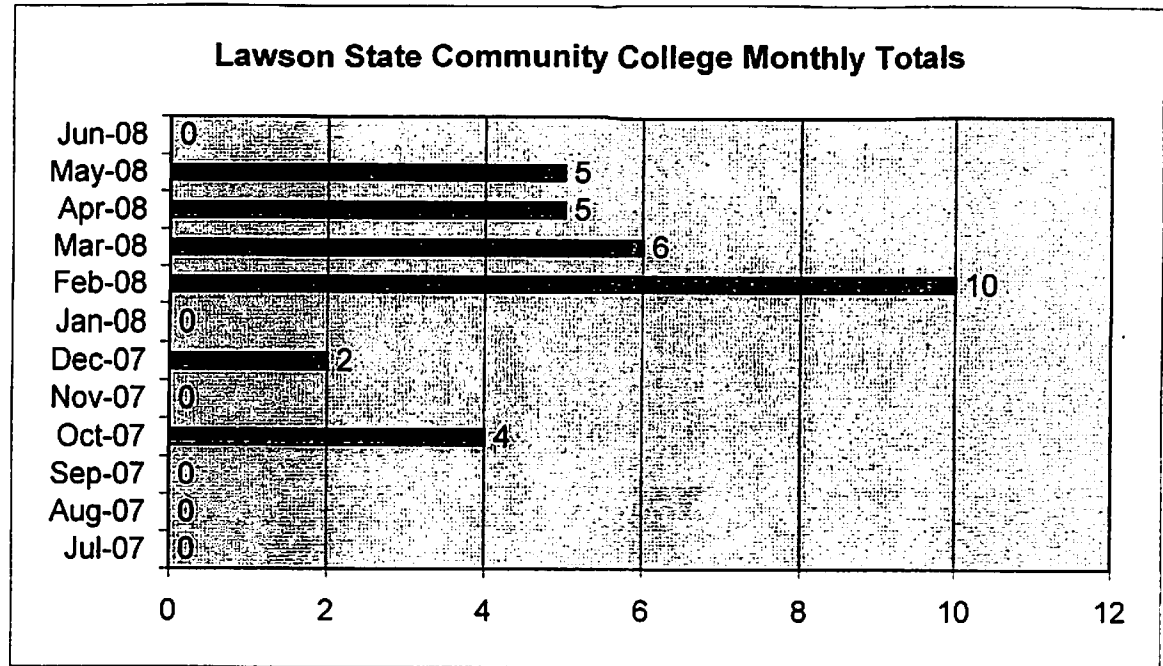
Adult Education Program Year July 2007 - June 2008

	Jul-07	Aug-07	Sep-07	1-Oct	Nov-07	Dec-07	Jan-08	Feb-08	Mar-08	Apr-08	May-08	Jun-08	Totals	Bronze	Gold	Silver
Alabama Southern	6	33	21	3	4	17	21	10	8	34	11	7	177	48	21	106
Bevill State	10	2		17	13	3	9	2	13	1	14	15	99	38	14	47
Bishop State	2		5	4	2		8	1		1	1		24	14	3	7
Calhoun	13	43	17	14	15	20	3	15	8	8	34	19	209	34	48	127
Central Alabama	6	6	4	24	1	6	19	4	14	4	13	3	104	39	10	55
Chattahoochee Valley												4	4	2		2
Enterprise-Ozark		8	4	7	1	10	3	9	9	4	13		68	27	4	37
Faulkner State	41	2		1	31	9	21				1		106	22	16	68
Gadsden State	12		8	3	27	20		19	18	7	13	10	157	44	27	66
J.F. Ingram					17			5		26		28	77	26	3	47
Jefferson State	10	5	4	8	6	5		5	4		7	9	66	21	6	36
Lawson State				4		2		10	6	5	5		32	16	3	13
Lurleen B. Wallace		2	1		3				6		1	3	16	4		12
Northeast Alabama	1	16		5		35	5	7	16	18	11	29	143	38	13	92
Northwest Shoals	4			7	12	16	4	6	56	4	36	8	159	60	13	80
Reid State					2				6		11	12	31	16	1	14
Shelton State	12	3	18	9	1	8	14	2	11	4	10	16	108	29	12	67
Southern Union	2	4			1	7	4	1	1		3		23	2	4	17
Trenholm State	15			14		32			16		16	14	104	43	6	58
Wallace State Dothan					25	7	4						36	17	4	15
Wallace State Hanceville	10		17	6	6	11	8	7	3	3	6	4	91	29	6	46
Wallace State Selma	9	7			11	1	1	2	3	2	3		33	26		13
AL National Guard			22	1	5				11	10	7	12	68	29	5	34
Autauga Co. FSC													0			
Drake State													0			
TOTALS	153	131	121	127	183	209	124	105	209	130	216	194	1902	624	219	1059



Lawson State Community College - AE

Date	Total	Bronze	Gold	Silver
2006-2007				
Jul-07	0			
Aug-07	0			
Sep-07	0			
Oct-07	4		1	3
Nov-07	0			
Dec-07	2		1	1
Jan-08	0			
Feb-08	10	7	1	2
Mar-08	6	3		3
Apr-08	5	3		2
May-08	5	3		2
Jun-08	0			
Total	32	16	3	13



Walters



**CAREER READY ALABAMA IS MADE POSSIBLE
THROUGH PARTNERSHIPS WITH:**

Alabama Office of Workforce Development
Alabama Community College System
Alabama Career Center System
Business Council of Alabama
Manufacture Alabama
Alabama AFL-CIO

FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE VISIT:

Career Ready Alabama
www.careerreadyalabama.com

Alabama Career Center System
www.servicelocator.org

Alabama College System
www.acs.cc.al.us

Based on ACT's WorkKeys®, Career Ready Alabama is a system for measuring and verifying skills required in the everyday workplace. Alabama's workforce benefits through improving the workplace skills of students or employees. Employees are best matched with jobs where they can be most successful. An additional benefit is the common language provided to individuals, businesses and educators for describing basic skills needed for jobs.

Career Ready

Be career ready with



Career Ready

ALABAMA

Certify the skills you have to get the job you want.

Get the facts about Career Ready Alabama

WHAT IS CAREER READY ALABAMA?

Career Ready Alabama is a job skills assessment system awarding Career Readiness Certificates which measure and verify skills critical to job success. Career Ready Alabama also offers training to help correct skills gaps.

FACT:

A Career Readiness Certificate helps you get better jobs with a greater potential to grow.

FACT:

A Career Readiness Certificate provides you with skill-based credentials that can enhance your career potential.

FACT:

With your Career Readiness Certificate, you verify you are trainable and ready for employment to potential employers.

FACT:

If improvement is needed in specific areas, the Career Ready Alabama program will help fill your skills gap.

FACT:

Career Readiness Certificates are widely recognized and valued by employers.

CAREER READINESS CERTIFICATE



GOLD



SILVER



BRONZE

The Career Ready Alabama program provides:

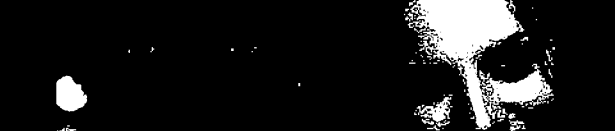
- Gold, Silver or Bronze Career Readiness Certificate
- Instruction
- Access to job bank

Certify your skills in the areas of:

- Applied Mathematics
- Locating Information
- Reading for Information

Get ready to improve the quality of life for you and your family by putting a Gold, Silver or Bronze Career Readiness Certificate to work for you. Show your potential employers that you have the skills they need. The benefits for your future are great.

Visit www.careerreadyalabama.com to learn more about getting your Career Readiness Certificate.



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Adult Education Program
Birmingham Campus
3060 Wilson Road SW
Birmingham, AL 35221

● *It's ALL Here &
It's ALL Good!*



● **Adult Education
Program**





Well-trained Staff

Individualized Instruction

Quality Education

The Lawson State Community College Adult Education and Skills Training Programs seek to provide accessible and quality adult education services that will enable adult individuals to become literate, employable, and productive citizens for the workforce.

Our vision is to build Jefferson County's most recognized and respected Adult Education and Skills Training Programs, staffed by highly qualified professionals who will teach adults to become literate and self-sufficient by providing learners with necessary tools to enhance their quality of life, which is vital to Alabama's economic and workforce development.

Lawson State Community College Adult Education Program provides academic instruction up to the college level. Areas of instruction include the following:

- Reading
- English
- Mathematics
- Social Studies
- Science

- English as a Second Language
- Preparation for the Alabama High School Graduation Exam

Eligibility

Anyone 16 years of age or older and not enrolled in school. An individualized program of study is planned based on one's goal and skill level as determined by assessment tests given at time of enrollment.

Cost

Adult Education services are free.

Individualized Instruction

Adults study individually and/ or in small groups facilitated by a qualified instructor. Each student progresses at his or her own pace.

Alabama High School Graduation Exam

Adults, 18 years of age and older not enrolled in high school, who have credits required for a high school diploma may study for the Alabama High School Graduation Exam.

Distance Learning

A GED online computer class allows students who cannot attend class to study for the GED test at home. Those who score on the ninth grade level or above on an assessment are eligible for the online class.

GED

GED stands for General Educational Development test. The test covers five areas: Language Arts, Writing; Social Studies; Science; Language Arts, Reading; and Mathematics. A free GED practice test to determine readiness for the GED test is available. The high school equivalence diploma is issued on the basis of satisfactory GED test scores.

ASVAB

Assistance is available for men and women who are studying for the Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (ASVAB) test.

Lawson State
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

7008 Planning Your Job Search

This booklet teaches the time-management skills you need to develop your own job-search plan. Learning how to better organize your activities will help you "find the time" you need to get the job you want.

Lawson State
COMMUNITY COLLEGE

Adult Education Program

Welcome to Lawson State Community College Adult Education Program. We offer training, available at various locations, in Pre-GED and GED Preparation, GED Online, English Language Learner (ELL), ESL, Life Skills, Employability Etiquette, and Basic Computer Literacy. Upon completion, the participants possess the skills necessary to compete in today's workplace.

3060 Wilson Road SW
Birmingham, AL 35221
(205) 929-6476
FAX (205) 929-6471

www.lawsonstate.edu



Life Skills Education
314 Washington Street
Northfield, MN 55057-2025
(507) 645-2994
www.lifeskillsed.com

Planning Your Job Search

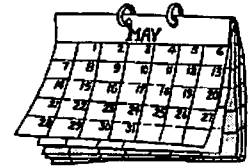
Making the Most of Your Time

Lawson State
COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Adult Education Program

Looking for a job is a job

We often complain about time; most of us feel we do not have enough of it, yet each of us has all there is. This contradiction can only be resolved when we learn to manage our time efficiently: the subject of this booklet.

To begin, answer a few questions to see how you're managing your time today.



- ? **How much time per week** am I spending on actually looking for a job?
- ? **How many resources** — newspapers, employment agencies, friends, etc. — am I using in my job hunt?
- ? **What things get more of my time and attention** than the search for a good job?
- ? **Who is making sure** that my job search is done in a way that will land me a job I want?

Here are the “right” answers — the ones that really work:

- ✓ You need to spend **20 to 40 hours per week** looking for a job, developing a resumé, contacting references, etc. If you want a full-time job, you'll have to look for it full-time!
- ✓ You need to use **many** different resources if you're going to find the right job.
- ✓ **Nothing** — other than your present job — should be getting more of your time and attention than the search for a new job. And,

- ✓ **You** are the only one who can make sure your job search will get you a job you really want.

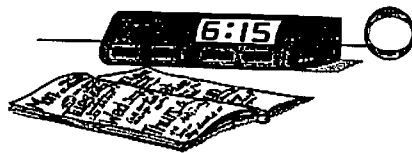
Looking for employment *is* a job — a *full-time* job, and there's a lot riding on how much work you get done. You may deserve some time off, or have to run a few errands, or really need to catch up on something or other, but such reasoning wouldn't work for an employer — and it won't work for you! The average employee works from nine to five, but *you* will have to work overtime and weekends.

You are the boss and, if you want to show some results for your effort (namely, a good job offer), you will have to get yourself to work on time. To do that, you will want to begin each day promptly and end each day with the next day's plan clearly mapped out.

You need a daily plan

Time can only be controlled properly through the use of a daily planned schedule. A schedule allows you to prioritize activities in the order of their importance and the order in which you will do them.

You will find that many of those “*I don't have time today*” items, like phoning all your new contacts or following up on leads, can be accomplished quite easily if you put them in their proper place in a schedule.



Take a good look at what you have to do

There are three types of time frameworks within any schedule: prime time, non-prime time, and down time.

- **Prime time:** Prime time activities are those which have to be done at a specific, prearranged time, and include interviews and appointments with contacts. Once scheduled, you should not allow any other activity to interfere with them.



- **Non-prime time:** Non-prime time may include such activities as reviewing and responding to mail, reading newspaper want ads, researching businesses, going to employment agencies, developing a contact network, and sending out cover letters and resumés. These activities are important but they can be scheduled *around* prime activities.

Because non-prime time activities do not need to be done at a specific time, they should only be done after you have completed your prime time activities.

- **Down time:** Down time includes all those activities which require quiet reflection and thought. These activities include planning your weekly schedule, sharing your plans with family and friends, and relaxing. Down time is important because you need the chance to recharge your energy supply. However, it should only occur after all prime time activities are accomplished.

Scheduling makes life easier

Developing a schedule and keeping yourself on it will help you to avoid the stress and pressure that confusion and disorganization cause, especially where last minute details are concerned.

If you're in the habit of “just putting it off til tomorrow,” it's time to create a new habit. The procrastinator only schedules himself for feelings of anxiety because nothing

important ever seems to get done. The planner is generally able to accomplish his goals and still have time left over.

Your top priority

Meeting people is *the* most important ingredient in your job search. You will meet people in every part of your job-hunting plan or schedule. You will meet receptionists, secretaries, personnel managers, recruiters, as well as employers themselves. Making a favorable impression on these people will assist you in realizing your primary goal: a good job.

You may never know who got you in the door

Secretaries and receptionists convey their impressions of you to their bosses. Human resources managers make the initial decisions as to who will get a further interview, just as a company recruiter does during visits to local area schools.

You obviously want to make a good impression on the employer, but remember you will see many other people who will form an opinion of you based on your attitude, presentation, and appearance. Because this information is readily available to the person who makes the hiring decisions, you need to impress each of these individuals, too.

The smaller the company, the more likely it is that the first person you meet will either be the boss or a potential co-worker. Favorably impressing the people with whom you have initial contact is critical to getting a job interview.

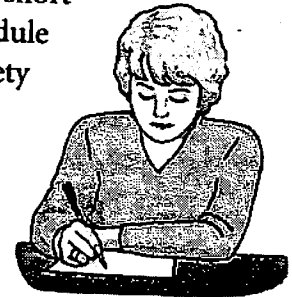


Developing a planned schedule

On pages eight and nine is an example of a well-planned job-hunting schedule. Every job-hunting activity is placed within a specific time boundary: an hour, a morning, or an afternoon.

This job-hunting schedule has been filled out using a computer. You don't have to put your schedule on a computer, but make your plan neat enough to be both organized and legible.

A careful study of the sample schedule will show you that you can accomplish a great deal in a short period of time. A well-planned schedule will enable you to accomplish a variety of routine tasks as well as remain flexible enough to schedule the unexpected — follow-ups on job leads, callbacks for a second interview, etc.



Your schedule should combine these two elements: discipline and flexibility.

■ Item #1: Read the Help Wanted ads.

While all help wanted ads are important, the Sunday edition Help Wanted ads are the largest; therefore, read them carefully and circle any ad that advertises a position you might be interested in.

Be sure to look at each of the sections in the help wanted classifieds since a position you want may be listed in a section in which you would not normally think to look; sections usually include professional, business, medical, sales, and general.

The daily help wanted ads should not be overlooked.

Check these the first thing in the morning. Good jobs do not remain open long and, if you're going to get one, you will need to be one of the first to push for it.

Arrange to have the daily paper delivered. If this is too costly, then go to the library — depending on where you live, you may have the luxury of having several daily papers to choose from. Check the classified advertisements, as well as the Business Section, and write down the appropriate names, addresses, and phone numbers.



Take note of any ads from employers who, although not advertising the job you want now, might employ people with your talents. Send a cover letter and resumé to contact those employers.

■ **Item #2: Share plans over dinner.**

Include your family and friends in your plans. Their ideas may be helpful. Let them know what happened last week and what you are planning this week. Remember, they are a readily available source of ideas and suggestions. They have friends who have friends, etc. and are a start to a larger contact network.

■ **Item #3: Relax.**

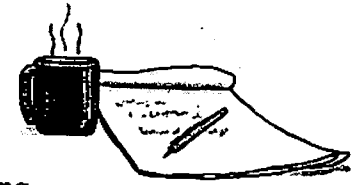
We all need time to relax and renew our energies. It is important to get enough rest during your job hunt. Appearing tired may negatively affect your chances, especially during an interview.

■ **Item #4: Plan the week.**

This is the most important 30 to 60 minutes you will work all week because it is the step that leads to all the others. Your goal is to block out a general outline of how you think the week should go. While open to change,

your plan for the week should also have a certain regularity to it.

Take what you learned from the previous week and try to develop further those strategies that seem to be working — making room by eliminating those things that have been tried and have failed.



Your job hunt *should* be a learning experience. There is little point in doing the same things week after week if you're not getting any results (job interviews). Shake up your schedule when necessary and plan new activities if the old don't seem to be working. If you're not sure what those new activities ought to be, *then make it a part of your plan to find out by scheduling time for the library, job counseling center, or a trusted advisor.*

■ **Item #5: Talk with people you know.**

Make time each day to tell someone new about your job hunt. These could be friends' parents, people you meet at social gatherings, fellow church members, former teachers, past employers or co-workers, your dentist, your neighbors.

The larger your network of contacts, the more likely it is "a friend of a friend" will get you the lead you're looking for. So, as you work on enlarging this group of people who know about your job search, keep asking the question: *Who else should I consider contacting?*

- Look through copies of *business correspondence* from the past couple of years and talk to those people *for* whom you did work, or *with* whom you worked (use business cards or your address book in the same way);
- Contact your school's *alumni office* and start receiving its publications; fellow graduates, even

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
9:00	Read Sunday Help Wanted Ads	Read newspaper and check help wanted ads	
10:00		(1)	
10:00	(1)	Review mail; respond to ads with cover letter and resume	Skim national business publication for industry information
11:30		(6)	
11:30	Dinner	Go to lunch and make contacts	
1:00		Share plans with family and friends	(7)
1:00	Ask for ideas	Contact employment agencies by phone	Follow up on leads
2:00		(2)	(8)
2:00	Relax	Network	Review mail
3:00		Schedule interviews	Network
3:00	(3)	Research business that offered interview	
4:00	Plan the week	(10)	
4:00		(4)	
5:00	Network	Check tomorrow's plan; rearrange, if necessary	
	(5)	(11)	

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			Sleep late
Review mail; respond to ads with cover letter and resume	Network	Use Internet access at library to research industry trends	(14)
	Schedule interview		
			Read newspaper and check help wanted ads
Read Business Section of newspaper	Research – read regional business publications at library	Follow up on leads	Review mail; respond to ads with cover letter and resume
	Go to state employment agency and check listings		Network
Network	(13)	Network	
Visit Chamber of Commerce and research business climate in area	Review mail; respond to ads with cover letter and resume	Research industry conditions	Relax

when they are not acquaintances, are good candidates for useful referrals;

The greater the number of people who hear about your search, the more likely *you* will hear about job openings.

Plan to spend some time each day networking.

■ **Item #6: Review mail and respond to ads.**

Review the mail sent in response to your letters. A potential employer may be requesting additional information which you'll want to supply quickly.

If you've sent letters requesting information or assistance, you'll want to deal with these responses *promptly*. Finally, send a resumé with a cover letter when that's appropriate.



■ **Item #7: Make luncheon contacts.**

Go to a lunch spot frequented by businesspeople. Strike up a casual conversation with the person next to you. This will often lead to an opportunity to mention that you are job-hunting and would appreciate any advice or suggestions. Have a copy of your resumé or business card available and leave it with this person when it's appropriate.

You may be thinking, *"I can't do that, I'd feel like an idiot. I'm too nervous, I wouldn't have anything to say... Strike up a conversation with a stranger? No way, that's not me."*

If you're planning a career in sales, this is definitely an opportunity for you to push the most valuable product you'll ever sell: yourself. If you're planning a career in management, one of the most valuable skills you can have is the ability to form working relationships with people you don't know — but people you need to work with. *All jobs in all businesses* require that you be able to

interact with a variety of people — whom you may or may not know — on a variety of levels.

This approach may be difficult for you. However, the experience you gain will prove beneficial in helping you do well on interviews — and you have nothing to lose! Your desire to work may so impress the people you are talking to, that they may be able to personally assist you in your search, or hire you themselves.

■ **Item #8: Contact employment agencies.**

If you are using employment agencies (and you should), check with them *weekly* and let them know your job search is still active. Make them aware of any changes in the position you desire. They cannot help you if they do not know you are still out there.

■ **Item #9: Schedule interviews.**

Once your job search is a few weeks old, you should be receiving requests for interviews. If possible, try to schedule only one interview a day; this will allow you to be fresh and alert during the interview process. If you must schedule more than one in a day, schedule one in the morning and one in the afternoon.



■ **Item #10: Research businesses.**

Take the time to gather information about the business that offered you an interview. If the business is large enough, do this by calling on the business before your interview and asking for a copy of their annual report or a recent company newsletter. If their location is not readily available to you, you may find similar information at your local library; if the library has Internet access, visit the company's website and see what you can learn. You should also consider using the telephone book's yellow pages (or an Internet equivalent, such as Big Yellow at www.bigyellow.com) to find individuals

willing to give you an informational interview as a way of learning more about the industry in which you wish to be employed. (See "The Informational Interview" by this publisher for help in determining *who* to talk to and *what* to talk about.)

All of this information you are gathering will allow you to ask intelligent questions at an interview and demonstrate a real interest in the position, the industry, and the company.

If it is a small business, ask the people you know if they know anything about it. The smaller the business, the less you are likely to find an article about the company in a business magazine or the business section of your paper. But you can still prepare for an interview by listing those questions that would offer similar information:

- ? *How long have you been in business?*
- ? *What made you want to start this business?*
- ? *It must be interesting to ____, do you get the chance to ____?*
- ? *What kind of growth or changes have you seen in this field? What do you think is going to happen in the future?*

Remember, *people are interested in those people who are interested in them.* Ask questions that draw out an employer; employers are proud of their work and want to talk about it — give them that opportunity.

■ **Item #11: Check and rearrange plan.**

It is important to be aware of your plans so that you don't overextend or overcommit yourself. Knowing what you are doing will keep you from trying to accomplish more than you can actually follow through on.

■ **Item #12: Follow up leads.**

Respond appropriately and immediately to any leads or suggestions businesspeople, friends, or other contacts make. Your response will most likely require a phone call or cover letter and resumé, requesting an interview or assistance in your job search.



■ **Item #13: Visit state employment agency.**

Check this agency weekly. Many job openings are posted; the earlier you respond the better, as each listing is likely to be a few days old by the time you see it.

■ **Item #14: Sleep late.**

Sleep later on Saturday. If you have followed your schedule faithfully, you have earned some time off.

Develop your own schedule

On pages 14 and 15 is a blank format for developing your own schedule. You can photocopy multiple copies of the one provided or design your own. If this pamphlet has made an impression on you, then you know that you must begin work on your own schedule now!!

The sample schedule can be adapted to meet your needs. The most important factor is that you develop a plan that makes sense for you and then stick to it. Do not let frustration or disappointment become a part of that schedule.

Use it or lose it

Most of us have to deal with the problem of managing time effectively. Managing time is not simply a matter of keeping to your daily calendar of appointments. It involves controlling all the time available to accomplish

	SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY
9:00 10:00			
10:00 11:30			
11:30 1:00			
1:00 2:00			
2:00 3:00			
3:00 4:00			
4:00 5:00			

WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY

your goal: getting a job.

It has been said that 80% of most people's productive activity takes place in only 20% of their time. Unless controlled properly, most activities tend to fill as much time as you make available for their accomplishment. *What could and should take only a short period of time to do is often allowed to expand to such a degree that other vital tasks are left undone.*

Did it help?

Many of us mismanage our time. Hours, even days, are spent doing one thing really well; however, if this activity is not a top priority item, the time has been misused. If you spend all day doing many little things, you might feel good about accomplishing what appears to be a great deal. You must ask yourself how important these things were to your job search: Did they help you reach your goal for the day? Or, are you more aware of the *number* of things you accomplished rather than the *value* of the tasks?

To make time work for you, you must honestly evaluate and prioritize your activities, then keep each activity within the time limits you've assigned to it. In this way, you will find you have more time to do what needs to be done.

It's up to you

This booklet has given you all the essentials for competent use of your job-hunting time. It is now your decision whether you will plan the work — and then work the plan.

If you fail to plan your use of time, you will not have enough of it. If you do schedule your time effectively, you will increase the number of job offers you receive and reduce the length of your job search. It's that simple.

For one reason or another, lots of new workers get frustrated with their new jobs and just give up on entry-level employment. This booklet offers a frank discussion of the problems and possibilities of 'starter' jobs. Explains why you want to keep a job you really don't enjoy, and how it might still be a bridge to the brighter future you're looking for.

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First Step Up

Making the Most
of Your Entry-Level Job



Lawson State
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Adult Education Program

The perfect job?



You'd like a job that you're happy to go to every day. That probably means you'd like a job that:

- ✓ *is interesting;*
- ✓ *pays well;*
- ✓ *has great co-workers;*
- ✓ *is easy to get to;*
- ✓ *offers good benefits.*

It would be terrific if this job also had the *hours you want*, lots of *chances for promotion*, and a *nice, laid-back boss*.

Most people would like that kind of work! And some people do have jobs like that... but those kinds of jobs are not all that easy to find. And they're not likely to be first-time jobs, either.

The truth is, many "entry-level" jobs aren't very exciting. The place where you work may not be the greatest. You may not have much chance to do the kinds of things you really enjoy. There are likely to be strict rules about starting and quitting times, what you can wear, and the tasks you're expected to finish on each shift. Pay and benefits are likely to be on the low side.

Given that list of negatives, it's not surprising that many workers in entry-level, minimum-wage jobs get discouraged... bored... disagreeable... even angry. It's tempting to write off a job like that:



- “I don’t need this! I’ll just quit and get something better tomorrow.”
- “The pay is so low, I might just as well stay home.”
- “This is a dead-end job. I’ll never get very far.”
- “By the time I’ve paid for the bus, a uniform, child care, lunches, and all that other stuff, I’m no better off with a job than I was without one!”
- “I’m sick of it! I don’t need all the aggravation that goes with working here.”
- “Joe doesn’t work 9 to 5, and he’s always got money. I’ll ask him to get me in on whatever he’s doing.”

What does “entry-level” mean?

Every career has a “ladder” — you start at the bottom and gradually climb up. For instance, maybe your first job is as a sales associate in a discount store. You do well at that and you become a cashier; after doing well at that too, you are promoted to the job of assistant manager, then manager of a department. Now you’re thinking about becoming manager of the store!

That sales associate position is an *entry-level job*. You are *entering* this particular career.

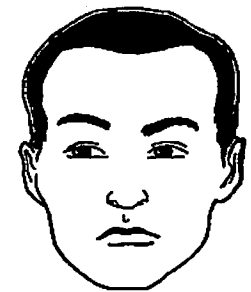
Suppose you decided, halfway up the ladder, that you wanted to get into a different career. If the new career is completely different — construction, for example — you’ll have to start at the bottom of *that* ladder, even though you have lots of experience in retail. That would mean another entry-level job. But if construction is what you really want, you’ll probably be willing to do that.

As you can see, an entry-level job is not necessarily a bad thing: it’s a start at getting someplace you want to go. So, if that’s the case, why do people quit those jobs so often?

“You can take this job and . . .”

There are many reasons why people in entry-level jobs quit. We’ve seen some of the excuses for giving up; there are others that are not so easy to put into words:

- **Boredom.** Many “starter” jobs aren’t very challenging. There may be a lot of repetition, doing the same task over and over. Time seems to go awfully slowly . . . except for your breaks!
- **Dissatisfaction.** You thought you’d be able to get your “dream job” right away. After all, you deserve it, don’t you? But the job you got isn’t at all what you wanted and expected. It just doesn’t seem fair.
- **Frustration.** The first few weeks of a job — *any* job — are tiring and sometimes tense and confusing. You may feel like you’re being pulled in too many directions at once, never getting the chance to really feel on top of things before you have to learn something else that’s new.
- **Envy.** Friends and family members may have jobs that seem a lot better than yours. Or maybe they aren’t working at all, so you feel like you’re missing out on the fun and free time that you used to share.
- **Resentment.** *Having* to get a job is enough to make some people decide they aren’t going to make much of an effort at it. It isn’t so much disliking the job, or the boss, or the inconvenient hours. It’s the whole idea of being told what to do.
- **Disappointment.** When you start a new job, just as when you move to a new place or buy a new outfit,



it's natural to expect that everything is going to be great, right away. Instead, you still wake up every day to most of the same old problems and worries.

What if...?

Before you give in to that desire to just up and quit... before you decide that you're not going to bother to go in to work on Monday... think about what comes next. Are you thinking:

? *"I'll go back on welfare (or unemployment). I won't be any worse off than I am now."*

! **Wrong!** Because of changes to the laws, most types of public assistance are being cut back sharply. For most people, there's a *limit on benefits* (a lifetime maximum of five years). Say you quit and you use up those benefits now, you'll be in real trouble later on if you can't find *any* job — not even a job like the one you're ready to quit right now.

? *"I can get another job, no problem."*

! The only jobs that are easy to get are ones a lot like the one you have now. And the more *recently* you're hired, the more chance you have of being let go if layoffs start. That won't be at a time of your choosing — and that may not be good timing for you!

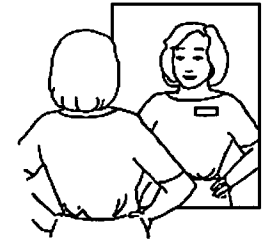
? *"My friend is doing a lot better than I am. I'm just as smart, so why should I be working so hard?"*

! For some people, it's a matter of pride to try to *look* and *talk* as though they're a big success. Your friend may not be as much of a success as you think. Or the money may be coming from something that isn't safe, or legal. Maybe your friend *is* doing well. But the fact is you can't count on being just as lucky. *You have to make your own luck.*

Where do I start?

The first step towards success on the job, and success in life, is a **positive attitude**. Get rid of negative thoughts and feelings about working, and you'll be making a big move in the right direction. Instead of looking at what's wrong with your job, think about how you can *use your job as a bridge to get to the things you want*:

- ★ **Personal satisfaction**, the feeling that what you do makes a difference. Work is a big part of life for most adults. Knowing that your job really matters makes you feel good about yourself, and good about your world.
- ★ **Respect**, the confidence of believing that you have worthwhile skills. When you have respect for the work you do, others will share that feeling, too. The example you set as a responsible worker is a big influence on others in your life. And it strengthens your authority as a parent and a partner.
- ★ **Security**, financial and personal. When you're earning your own way, you're the one who calls the shots. You can make your own choices... and the choices you have *will get better* as your job record and your work skills improve.



Looking ahead

It's the end of another long, hard week...

- *You think your boss was being unfair when she asked you to stay late to check all the cash drawers.*
- *The one co-worker you really like is leaving at the end of next week.*
- *Your babysitter called to say that her own little boy has the chicken pox, so your kids will probably be coming down with it too.*
- *You just got a letter saying that your application for a credit card has been turned down.*
- *It's been a rotten day.*
- *You feel like quitting.*

There's nothing wrong about getting discouraged and disgusted when things like this happen. (And they do happen — to everyone.) It's natural, and, at times like these, it's also natural to think about quitting.

But before you give up, look down the road a ways. You know where you're *coming from* and, probably, right now you don't like it much! The important thing, though, is to ask yourself: "*Where am I going?*"

Your job, should you choose to accept it...

In order to reach your goals —

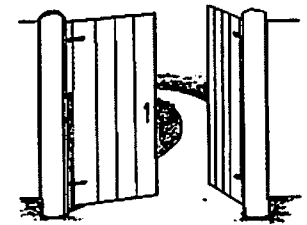
- ✓ well-paid work that you feel good about;
- ✓ personal relationships that make you happy;
- ✓ a nice home in a safe neighborhood;
- ✓ a comfortable life-style for yourself and your family

— you have to have a plan for *getting there*.

And the goals and plans have to be realistic. Wishing and hoping are fine — everybody needs dreams! But they can't come true without *action*. Fantasies like winning the lottery can get in the way of the dreams that you *can* make into reality — getting more education, starting your own business, whatever!

Take the time to think about where you *want* to be... where you *can* be... in six months, a year, five years. Then think about how you can use the job you have now as the first step in a plan to start reaching your goals.

It's not your ideal job. But there are things about it that you can use to your advantage. So your goal *right now* is to learn as much as you can and get as much as you can from *this* entry-level job, so you can *use* it as a gateway to something better.



Think positive!

A positive attitude is something that you can get for yourself, for free, for keeps. You can teach yourself to:

- ✓ look on the bright side; find the positive in everyday events;
- ✓ listen to people who make you feel confident and good about yourself;
- ✓ believe that when good things happen to you, it's because you worked for them and deserve them;
- ✓ have faith that when bad things happen, they're temporary, and they didn't come about because you're a bad person.

We've looked at some of the negatives of entry-level employment. But there are also a lot of *benefits* that you can expect even from a "starter" job.

These benefits don't show up in your paycheck, at least at first. But they're very real, and they can help you get a better job... and a better life.

You already know what you have to put *into* your job. Now let's look at what you can get *out* of it.

1. You can learn more skills

Know-how makes the difference between *building a career* and *having a job*, between *getting ahead* and *just barely making it*. The amount of education and training you have directly affects:

- ✓ the types of work you can expect to get;
- ✓ the amount of money you'll earn;
- ✓ your chances for promotion.

Every job gives you chances to learn, and what you learn puts you ahead of the people who haven't bothered. Some of the things you can learn in the workplace are specific skills in:

- ▶ **Customer service:** helping people, answering questions, listening to complaints and making sure that they go to the right person.
- ▶ **Dealing with money:** taking care of bills and receipts, making change, running a cash register, processing credit cards, calculating tax.
- ▶ **Basic business procedures:** keeping track of important papers, dealing with mail, answering the phone.
- ▶ **Using tools and equipment:** anything from running a forklift, to a deep fryer, to an industrial vacuum or dishwasher.

Some entry-level jobs also offer formal education benefits. This can cover anything from certification on a particular kind of equipment, to English-language instruction, to paid time off for classes, and even help with tuition for taking certain approved classes. What's available depends on the employer. And usually you only become eligible for education benefits after you've been on the job for a while.

Whatever you can learn, whether it's informal on-the-job training or a classroom education program, is a good deal for *you*. Anything that you can do well can be worth money. You become *more useful* to your present employer, and *more attractive* to other employers you'll be talking to in the future. And every new skill and piece of information you learn makes you feel *more confident*.



2. You can develop "work-smarts"

Your job is also a great chance to improve your **soft skills** — personal abilities like:

- ▶ **Getting along well with others.** Teamwork is important in just about every kind of business. If you can cooperate effectively and have the knack of making a group operate smoothly, you have a skill that's valuable to many employers.
- ▶ **Good problem-solving.** In today's fast-paced, fast-changing working world, employers need people who like to figure out how things work. Someone who asks the right questions — and comes up with an idea that might make things better — has a head start on landing a good job.
- ▶ **Paying attention to details.** Little things *do* count. The kind of person who sticks to a task until every-

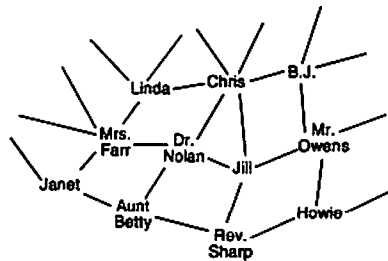
thing is done right will always find an employer who's willing to provide the training needed for a specific job.

- ▶ **Enthusiasm and energy.** Up-beat people who really listen and learn have a much easier time finding good job opportunities. Lots of employers will take a chance on someone who is inexperienced but eager to take on new challenges.

3. You can build your network

Your *network* is your friends, co-workers, and other people in your area of employment who know you and the quality of your work. A network comes in very, very handy when you're looking for advancement in your company, or a different job altogether.

Even in an entry-level job, you're going to meet people who can help you in one way or another as you move up the career ladder — supervisors; trainers; customers; co-workers; the public.



Remember that a person who is at entry-level *now* — just like you — may be in a position of more

responsibility some day. So your co-workers are an important part of your personal network. You may find people in your network helpful in various ways:

- ▶ **Advice** about where to look for your next job; where you can get job training; the best ways to find services like child care, transportation, etc.
- ▶ **Information** about what positions are opening up, what special qualities the employer is looking for, how the company is doing, etc.

- ▶ **Personal references and recommendations.** These are even more important as you move higher up the job ladder. A very good reference gives you a very good shot at the advancement you're hoping for.

Why bother?

Take a second (and a third) look at your job frustration. Be sure that your decisions make *long-term sense*. There are plenty of good reasons to stick with your entry-level job for at least six months — reasons that make sense for *you* and *your future*, not just for your employer!

It's true that your employer will lose if you leave; the company has put time and money into hiring and training you, even if the training was not as complete as you'd like.

But it's also true that *you* lose by leaving too soon. You are building your work reputation, for better or worse. What will that reputation be? If you quit now, how will you convince the next employer you talk to that you won't quit on him, too — leaving him high and dry after just a few weeks' work?

The single most important reason to hang on to a job, even a job that you don't like very much, may be this: *It's easier to get a job when you already have a job.*



It takes one to get one...

The best way to *get* a job is to *have* one?

That may sound strange. You may think, "Someone who already has a job doesn't *need* one nearly as much as a

person who's out of work. Wouldn't a boss rather give a chance to somebody who doesn't have a job, instead of taking a worker away from another employer?"

The fact is that *an employer is more likely to hire you if you're already working*. From the employer's point of view:

- ★ If you're already working, that shows you really want a job and you're a serious worker.
- ★ Someone is willing to pay for your time, so you must have worthwhile skills and abilities.
- ★ You've already got some job training, even if it's not in exactly the same type of employment.

When you have a job, you have a bargaining chip. Employers know that they have to offer you something more than what you're already getting, whether that means:

- *higher pay;*
- *better hours;*
- *more benefits; or,*
- *more opportunities for self-improvement.*

Otherwise, there's not much reason for you to want to start all over again, learning to fit in a new workplace, and probably having to learn new skills.

And sometimes, *getting another job offer can help you get a better deal at the place you're already working*. If you've been a good employee at QuickMart, Mr. Parker would rather give you a raise, a promotion, or better hours than have you go to work across the street for Ms. Ruiz at SpeedyShop. After all, it takes time, trouble, and effort to *find and train* workers.

The big picture

Instead of saying to yourself — "*What have I got to lose if I quit? This isn't much of a job anyway*" — look back at that list of what you can *gain* by sticking with your entry-level job. Then, look at these advantages as well:

- ▶ **Self-esteem.** You feel good about yourself when you see something through — hang in there *now* for the better times *later*. And pretty soon you'll start to realize that you're gaining the skills and making the contacts that lead to a job you can be proud of, a future *you* can control.
- ▶ **Credits** towards unemployment insurance, sick time, and Social Security. You automatically *earn* these as you work, and they're a major financial safety net. They're important for the future security of your family, too.
- ▶ **Benefits** such as health insurance, vacation time, employee discounts, a savings plan. Almost every employer offers some extras to workers who put in more than a certain number of hours a week and who stay on the job for at least several months.

No excuses

It's easy to get into the habit of blaming somebody else, or just blaming your own "bad luck," when things don't turn out the way you'd like.

- ✗ "*My boss doesn't like me. No matter how hard I try, nothing is ever just right.*"
- ✗ "*It's just asking too much to expect me to go to work every day, and make sure the kids are doing okay, and run a household, and fix meals, and do errands.*"

- ✘ “It isn’t fair that I’m expected to change everything in my life so fast and so suddenly.”
- ✘ “They don’t know what they’re doing at work... so how can they criticize me?”
- ✘ “If I didn’t have such rotten luck, I would have gotten the job I really wanted at the mall.”
- ✘ “A lot of people at work just sit around. They have it so easy, why should I be the only one knocking myself out?”
- ✘ “I don’t get any respect at work. Who does she think she is, yelling at me because I was a little late?”

The fact is, neither jobs nor people are perfect. Most of the things that bother you about your job are likely to exist in every entry-level job! This is another

reason why it’s important to stick it out if you can: Stay long enough to become skilled and you won’t be looking at an entry-level job next time around.

Playing the blame game, getting yourself fired, or simply giving up won’t help. What *will* help is finding something to learn from this “trial by fire” experience and moving on with your life.

Do you really believe you’re worth more money than you’re getting? Do you think you honestly deserve a better deal? Do you have a clear, step-by-step plan for getting it?

Good for you! *If you believe in yourself, other people will too.*



Success — it’s habit-forming

Making excuses can become a habit. Luckily, so can achieving success.

Every time you try, you have a chance to win. There will be times when you feel down and discouraged about your job. You may feel like quitting. **And the day will probably come when quitting is the right move.** Just make sure that you’re *making a choice* to move forward and *not taking a chance* that will move you backward.

If you haven’t worked for a long time, perhaps never had a job before...

If your education is incomplete and your math and language skills aren’t very good...

If you’ve had personal or legal problems such as family difficulties, drug or alcohol abuse...

...you already know that you have a lot of catching up to do before you can compete for the kind of career you want.

And if you’re reading this pamphlet, *you’ve already started to overcome* some of the things that have been standing in your way. With the right attitude and the right training, your entry-level job can be a giant step towards a bright future.

Employment Check-up

It’s always smart to do a self-check before making a decision. On the next page, you have the chance to take the time to think hard about your job situation right now, its good and bad points, and how you can work your way towards the future you want.

Three things I like about my present job:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Three things I dislike about my present job:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Are the negatives listed above typical of most entry-level jobs?

- Yes No

The three most important things I'll look for in my next job. (Be as specific as you can. For example, "I want to know in advance how long before I'll get a job review for a promotion and raise.")

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Two mistakes I've made in this job that I don't want to repeat:

1. _____
2. _____

When I think of my dream job, it would be:

To get my dream job, I will need to: (List the things you'd have to do or learn; for example, "get a hairdresser's license".)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____