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## ABSTRACT

The 1993-94 PASSAGE newsletter was established to create a customized educational/career-development/work-related informational publication for Pennsylvania's adult learners and educators. The project's main objective was to provide timely workplace and job skills information to Pennsylvania's adult learners, unemployed/underemployed individuals, adult educators, career counselors/trainers, and resource/training centers. The following include what the newsletter project accomplished: established a format that was easy to read; maintained a hands-on approach that could be used by individuals or in whole group settings; expanded its network of educators, business professionals, and adult learners by initiating a reader survey; accessed up-to-date information from area and regional resource centers; used state-of-the-art computer equipment for layout/design; and encouraged feedback and writer contributions. Ten issues were prepared. PASSAGE had a circulation of 2,800. (The 10 issues of PASSAGE are included. Topics include the following: classroom skills used in the workplace, employer expectations, job search strategies, growing career fields, labor market trends, success stories, preparing for the interview, keeping one's job, resume writing, coping with unemployment, financial aid opportunities for school, temporary workers, promotions, turnover in the workplace, and summer employment.) (YLB)

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# PASSAGE

"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"

## 353 Report

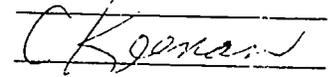
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**Fiscal Year:** July 1, 1993 to June 30, 1994

The Beaver County Area-Labor Management Committee  
400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, Pennsylvania 15027  
(412) 869-7890

**Federal Allocation:** \$34,816.00

**Project Number:** 099-4015

*"The activity which is the subject of this report was supported in part by the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the U.S. Department of Education or the Pennsylvania Department of Education, and no official endorsement by these agencies should be inferred."*

CF 067652

# PASSAGE

*"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"*

## 353 Report

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# Abstract Page

Title: PASSAGE - "Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"

Project No: 099-4015

Funding: \$34,816.00

Project Director: Bernadette Mangie

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**Purpose:** The 1993-1994 **PASSAGE** newsletter was established to address State Section 353 Priority B-2 which focuses on the production and dissemination of a special-interest newsletter. The newsletter was published 10 times a year, at a length of eight (8) pages or longer, and was devoted to a single adult-education topic or with each issue devoted to a particular topic of adult-basic education or literacy. To address this priority, the 1993-1994 **PASSAGE** newsletter project's main objective was to provide timely workplace and job-skills' information to Pennsylvania's adult learners, unemployed/underemployed individuals, adult educators, career counselors/trainers, and various resource/training centers. No other publication similar to **PASSAGE** was available on a regular schedule and was specifically geared toward the educational/career-related needs of adult learners in Pennsylvania. Also, a publication that complemented other services and special projects offered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education continued to be needed.

**Procedures:** To meet the goals/objectives addressed in State Section 353 Priority B-2 and to create an innovative resource, the **PASSAGE** newsletter: highlighted a variety of topics (e.g., classroom skills used in the workplace, employer expectations, job-search strategies, growing career fields, labor-market trends, and success stories); established a format that was easy to read; maintained a hands-on approach that could be used by individuals or in whole-group settings; expanded its network of educators, business professionals, and adult learners by initiating a reader survey, encouraging telephone correspondence, and attending staff development activities; utilized a professional staff of educators, job-search training professionals, and writers; accessed up-to-date information from area and regional resource centers; established a production schedule; utilized state-of-the art computer equipment for layout/design; and encouraged feedback and writer contributions.

**Summary of Findings:** Increased reader feedback and reader circulation of **PASSAGE**, economic factors, high unemployment, employer demand for formal training beyond high school, a decrease in jobs with lower skills, and a large percentage of adults without a high school diploma, continued to create the need for an innovative publication that provides educational/career-directional/job-search information for Pennsylvania's adult educators and students.

**Comments:** After five years of publication, the **PASSAGE** newsletter remains an established and unique resource for adult students and educational training professionals in Pennsylvania; it continues to complement services and resources provided by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. In the 1993-1994 project year, the publication continued to understand and meet the needs of its audience by providing customized information which was specifically designed to assist this audience.

**Products:** Ten (10) issues were prepared between July 1, 1993, and June 30, 1994. **PASSAGE** had a circulation of twenty-eight hundred (2800). The first issue was distributed in September 1993, and the last issue was distributed in June 1993. Each issue was eight (8) pages in length. (Also, various reports were submitted to the Pennsylvania Department of Education.)

**Descriptors:** (To be completed only by Bureau staff)

# Introduction

## ◆ Purposes/Objectives

The 1993-1994 **PASSAGE** newsletter was established to address State Section 353 Priority B-2. State Section 353 Priority B-2, as addressed in the Federal Adult Education Act Section 353 Guidelines for Special Projects and Staff Development, focuses on the production and dissemination of a special-interest newsletter to be published 10 times a year at a length of eight (8) pages or longer devoted to a single adult education topic or with each issue devoted to a particular topic of adult-basic education or literacy.

The 1993-1994 **PASSAGE** newsletter project's main objective was to provide timely workplace and job-skills' information to Pennsylvania's adult learners, unemployed/underemployed individuals, adult educators, career counselors/trainers, and various resource/training centers. *To meet its goals and objectives of creating a customized educational/ career-development/ work-related informational publication for Pennsylvania's adult learners and educators, the **PASSAGE** newsletter:*

- ◆ Highlighted a variety of topics for adults in transition (classroom skills used in the workplace, employer expectations, job-search strategies, growing career fields, labor-market trends, and success stories).
- ◆ Provided unique career-development resources/classroom materials for instructors, counselors, job trainers, and libraries/resource centers. The newsletter's design and purpose encouraged a hands-on approach that was utilized by individuals and in classroom settings.
- ◆ Established a look and personality that was accessible/easy to read.
- ◆ Expanded its network of educators, business professionals, and readers and provided articles that focused on innovative programs, success stories, and developing an awareness of the importance of pursuing an education to improve employment opportunities.

- ◆ Encouraged reader feedback and guest writer contributions.
- ◆ Promoted life-long education.
- ◆ Complemented the educational, workplace, and job-skills' resource materials available through the Pennsylvania Department of Education.
- ◆ Distributed twenty-eight hundred copies of the newsletter each month (from September 1993 to June 1994).

## ◆ Rationale and Background

With factors such as high unemployment rates, increased educational and training requirements for many career fields, and a high percentage of Pennsylvania's residents who have not graduated from high school, the need for a publication that is written for the adult learner and highlights the importance of life-long education and how it applies to today's workplace continues to be necessary. Also, the need for a newsletter which provides classroom materials that feature hands-on workplace and job-skills' information for adult educators remains important. Research revealed that very few similar publications were available on a regular basis. Based on these facts and the previous educational/career-development/job-search training experience of the Beaver County Labor-Management Committee's staff (formerly The Midland Center, Inc.), the Pennsylvania Department of Education has approved the publication of the **PASSAGE** newsletter since 1989.

## ◆ Time Frame

For the 1993-1994 project year, ten issues (each issue was eight pages in length) of **PASSAGE** were mailed to educational/employment-related programs for adults throughout the Commonwealth. During the project year, **PASSAGE** had a monthly circulation of 2,800. Also, reports on the progress of the newsletter were due and completed on a regular basis.

## ◆ Staff/Key Personnel

The Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee utilized three staff members, on a part-time basis, to organize and produce the 1993-1994 **PASSAGE** newsletter series. These individuals have training and experience in educational/career-development/job-search instruction and in the areas of writing, editing, computer operations, layout/design, desktop publishing, and outreach/communications. In addition, **PASSAGE** utilized volunteers for proofreading and bulk mailing each issue. The positions needed to successfully operate the project were:

**Executive Director** - The executive director was responsible for managing the internal functions of the **PASSAGE** newsletter project. This individual communicated with the **PASSAGE** newsletter staff to ensure that all set goals and objectives were met in a timely manner. This individual met with the staff on a weekly basis. In addition, the executive director reported to the Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee's Board of Directors on a monthly basis. This individual appropriated 192 hours to the **PASSAGE** newsletter project. All funding for this part-time position was obtained from local-match monies.

**Project Manager/Chief Editor/Writer** - The Project Manager/Chief Editor/Writer was responsible for the day-to-day functions and overall direction of the **PASSAGE** newsletter project. This individual's duties/responsibilities included writing, editing, researching, developing topics, ensuring that deadlines were met, reviewing the progress of the newsletter (goals and objectives), and preparing reports/documents requested by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee's Board of Directors. In addition, this individual had fiscal responsibilities. The Project Manager/Chief Editor/Writer was assigned 192 hours to the **PASSAGE** newsletter project. Funding for this position was provided from federal grant monies.

**Associate Writer-Editor/Desktop-Publishing Specialist** - The Associate Writer-Editor/Desktop-Publishing Specialist was responsible for writing articles, coordinating article submissions, outreach work, editing articles, word processing, desktop publishing,

contacting the print shop, coordinating the bulk mailing, and organizing/updating the newsletter's database. This individual dedicated 1580 hours to the **PASSAGE** newsletter project. Funding for this part-time position was obtained from federal grant monies (1376 hours) and private-match monies (204 hours).

**Volunteers** - The **PASSAGE** staff recruited five volunteers from the community. The volunteers, business and education professionals, assisted in proofreading, writing articles, and bulk mailing the newsletter. These services were strictly voluntary.

### ◆ Audience

The **PASSAGE** newsletter was targeted to adult learners/unemployed individuals/underemployed individuals and educational/training professionals (adult-education programs, job-search programs, and resource centers/libraries) across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.

## ◆ Summary

Having completed five years of providing educational/career-directional/job-search information, the **PASSAGE** newsletter remains a useful resource that complements the many services and materials offered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. It continued to provide much needed advice and guidelines to Pennsylvania adult learners who are in the process of continuing their education and exploring career/employment opportunities.

### **Additional Report Copies**

*Persons interested in obtaining additional copies of this report may contact:*

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Bureau of Adult Basic and Literacy Education, Pennsylvania Department of Education  
333 Market Street, 12th Floor, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126-0333

Clearinghouse Specialist

AdvancE

Pennsylvania Department of Education Resource Center  
333 Market Street, Harrisburg, Pennsylvania 17126-0333

Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center

5347 William Flynn Highway, Route 8

Gibsonia, Pennsylvania 15044-9644

## A. Statement of the Problem.

A combination of many factors has greatly affected the employment opportunities available to adult learners in Pennsylvania and throughout the United States. Since the early 1980s, Pennsylvanians have dealt with high unemployment rates. Many counties once flourished from the stability of abundant industries--which today have downsized tremendously. Jobs that are more demanding will continue to emerge in Pennsylvania and throughout the United States, and most of these jobs will require formal education beyond high school. In addition, many jobs with lower skills will continue to disappear. This situation continues to create a significant problem for undereducated, unemployed, or underemployed individuals in Pennsylvania.

*For example...*

- ◆ Through the year 2005, the educational and training requirements will be increasing for the jobs with a better future and better pay. Many of the jobs that will grow the fastest in the years ahead require at least a bachelor's degree. (U.S. Bureau of Labor and Statistics)
- ◆ Nearly half of the nation's 191 million adults lack a basic proficiency with English and math skills. While the overall educational level of Americans has been on the rise, the demands in the workplace have increased at a faster rate. (U.S. Department of Education)
- ◆ Half of all existing jobs will be eliminated in the next 20 years. These jobs will be replaced by new jobs that require individuals who are educated to learn new skills and to constantly adapt to the changing work environment. (U.S. Department of Labor)
- ◆ Workers who need and receive training to get their jobs earn more annually than those who reported not needing training. (Census Bureau)
- ◆ The fastest-growing occupations will require much higher math, language, and reasoning abilities than current jobs. Also, many jobs with lower-skill levels will disappear. (Workforce 2000, Hudson Institute)

- ◆ According to the U.S. Bureau of Statistics: office and factory automation, changes in consumer demand, and substitution of imports for domestic products are expected to cause employment to decline in many occupations that require little formal education; and one out of every eight manufacturing jobs in Pennsylvania is expected to disappear between 1990 and 2005.
- ◆ According to the 1990 Census of Population and Housing, out of 11, 881,643 Pennsylvania residents who are 18 years of age or older: 762,906 individuals have quit school before completing the ninth grade level and 1,455,419 individuals have quit school before earning their high school diplomas (grade levels 9-12).

These statistics reveal the importance of helping adult learners understand and practice life-long learning. Also, they dictate what steps adult learners need to take to conduct a successful job-search campaign and to achieve their long-term career goals. In the 1993-1994 project year, the **PASSAGE** newsletter addressed these difficult challenges for adult learners. Since its first year, the publication has been custom-made for the specific needs of Pennsylvania's adult learners and has utilized an established statewide network of educators and business professionals to highlight information that assists adult learners with their educational and career-related challenges.

While a variety of resources are available on this subject matter, no comparable publication made workplace and job-skills' information its only focus and targeted this material specifically to Pennsylvania's adult learners and the professionals who assist these individuals. Publications that address this subject area often fail to speak directly to the adult learner, to write for individuals who are currently unemployed, and to present material at less difficult reading levels.

## B. Goals and Objectives With Which To Explore The Problem.

The 1993-1994 **PASSAGE** newsletter addressed State Section 353 Priority B-2. State Section 353 Priority B-2, as addressed in the Federal Adult Education Act Section 353 Guidelines for Special Projects and Staff Development, focuses on the production and dissemination of a special-interest newsletter to be published 10 times a year at a length of eight (8) pages or longer devoted to a single adult education topic or with each issue devoted to a particular topic of adult-basic education or literacy.

To successfully meet the various goals and objectives defined in State Section 353 Priority B-2, **PASSAGE's** sponsoring organization, the Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee, established measurable guidelines to monitor/ensure the effectiveness of the newsletter project.

*The goals and objectives for the 1993-1994 **PASSAGE** newsletter included:*

1. **Providing** a timely, innovative publication that addressed the unique workplace and job-skills' needs of Pennsylvania's adult learners, especially the unemployed and underemployed. **PASSAGE** was designed to be different than other publications. For example, no other publication similar to **PASSAGE** was available on a regular schedule and was specifically geared toward the adult learner's educational/career-related concerns. While various magazines, newsletters, and books featured workplace and job-skills information, these publications did not focus entirely on material for the adult learner. A newsletter that complemented and enhanced other services and special projects offered by the Pennsylvania Department of Education continued to be needed during the 1993-1994 project year.

The main subject areas covered in **PASSAGE** included:

- ◆ Employer/Employee Expectations
- ◆ Classroom Skills Used in the Workplace
- ◆ Student-Success Stories
- ◆ Job-Search Strategies
- ◆ Exploring Career Fields
- ◆ Successful Programs/Services
- ◆ Counseling
- ◆ Impact of Technology
- ◆ Exploring Educational Training Opportunities
- ◆ Labor-Market Trends
- ◆ Special Needs of Adult Learners
- ◆ STUDENTaccesspage/STAFFinfopage

2. **Producing** a customized publication that provided unique resource/classroom materials for instructors, counselors, job trainers, and libraries/resource centers. Instructors were provided with hands-on exercises (STUDENTaccesspage and STAFFinfopage) that focused on how basic skills learned in the classroom are used everyday in the workplace. A new STUDENTaccesspage or STAFFinfopage appeared in each issue of **PASSAGE**. Also, two special issues were written specifically, for adult educators, to be adapted into classroom materials. Special-interest issues were prepared on Learning Advocates and Finding Summer Employment.

3. **Continuing** as a networking tool for various programs across the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania (ABE and GED programs and various job-training services). The newsletter highlighted inspirational programs, services, and individuals; it also promoted awareness and encouraged communication.

4. **Creating** a publication that was accessible (layout/design) and was written at a reading level which was appropriate for its audience. The format of the newsletter consisted of: two (2) and three (3) columns, front-page table of contents, informational text boxes, pictures/graphics (at least three per issue), lift-off quotes/excerpts, spacing (interline/intercolumn), a notebook format that encouraged the readers to save volumes for future reference, and body text, titles, subtitles, and bullet statements that increased readability. New features for the 1993-1994 project year included a two-color process, up-graded quality of paper, and binding. This improved the newsletter's professional appearance, readability, and durability for long-term usage. To ensure that the reading level was appropriate, close attention was given to: the length of the articles, sentences, and paragraphs; personalizing each article; vocabulary development; and the tone/personality of the publication.

5. **Encouraging** life-long education in an ever-changing and challenging work environment. This philosophy was written into every issue of the newsletter.

6. **Serving** as a companion publication to PDE's 353 Special Project "What's the Buzz." With different focuses, both newsletters complemented each other and provided timely information on a regular basis to programs across the Commonwealth.

7. **Complementing** the educational, workplace, and job-skills' resource materials that were available through the PDE's clearinghouses--AdvancE and the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center and ERIC.

8. **Distributing** twenty-eight hundred copies of the newsletter each month (from September to June) to educational/career-related programs across Pennsylvania. Ten (10) issues were prepared between July 1, 1993, and June 30, 1994. Each issue was eight (8) pages in length.

9. **Establishing** accountability for the **PASSAGE** staff. The Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee was responsible for researching and developing information that was accurate and appropriate for **PASSAGE's** audience. During editorial meetings, the staff made certain that all articles were properly researched and that the material presented was timely and had statewide application.

## C. Procedures Employed To Study or Explore The Problem.

During the 1993-1994 project year, the **PASSAGE** staff used various methods and resources to study/attack the problem. The six (6) areas that were given considerable attention and contributed to the newsletter's success were the experience of the educational staff, statewide networking, research, internal/external feedback, publication experience, and an established time schedule.

### ◆ Staff of Adult Educators

The **PASSAGE** staff and their associate staff of the Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee have extensive experience working with and instructing adult students seeking their GED diplomas and with dislocated workers, single parents/homemakers, and underemployed individuals exploring educational, career-development information, and employment assistance. Having acquired years of first-hand knowledge and having established a network of contacts, the Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee's staff was a valuable resource for producing a newsletter that addressed the concerns of the adult learner.

### ◆ Networking

The second area of importance was networking with educators and business professionals across the Commonwealth. This communication aided in obtaining information, articles, and resources. Rather than rely on only their own experiences, the **PASSAGE** staff encouraged educators' and business professionals' participation. These individuals supplied first-hand knowledge of the educational requirements for various career fields, of changes in the workplace, of effective job-search techniques, and of self-help programs that were available.

Their contributions added variety, credibility, and a unique viewpoint for the readers. Examples included Delores L. Howland, Vice President for Education, Nationalities Service Center; Patrick Boland, Employment and Training Coordinator, AYS, Inc.; Eric Yeneral, M. Ed., M.A., JTPA O&A Supervisor, Goodwill Industries; and Chris A. Hertig, CPP, CPO, York College of Pennsylvania. Networking was conducted through the newsletter (readers were invited to call the 800 number), at regional workshops/staff-development functions, by contacting professionals throughout the Commonwealth, at the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center, and through word of mouth.

### ◆ **Research**

In addition to utilizing **PASSAGE's** experienced staff and networking with educational/business professionals, **PASSAGE** conducted a great deal of research before writing each issue. In order to provide timely and factual information, sources such as the "Occupational Outlook Handbook," "U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics," and the "PA State Data Center" were used in the formulation of articles. The Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center and ERIC were valuable sources of factual/up-to-date information during the 1993-1994 project year. Also, various publications that deal with conducting a job search and preparing for an interview helped educate the **PASSAGE** staff on various effective job-hunting techniques and on the expectations of the employer.

### ◆ **Internal/External Feedback**

The **PASSAGE** staff encouraged reader feedback (through a reader survey and during telephone inquiries) to better understand what information suits the readers' educational/career-related needs and how the newsletter can be improved. Next, the **PASSAGE** staff conducted monthly editorial meetings to evaluate the effectiveness of the newsletter, to review reader feedback, and to make certain that all objectives were being met in a timely manner. Lastly, the **PASSAGE**

staff communicated with the Pennsylvania Department of Education to make certain that all goals were being achieved.

### ◆ **Publication Experience**

Having completed the fifth year of publication, the **PASSAGE** newsletter has become an established resource for adult learners and educators in Pennsylvania. During the first two years of publication, a great deal of effort was spent creating a newsletter that was unique--while trying at the same time to learn more about the audience's needs. At the start of the third year of publication, the staff had acquired many contacts and resources and began to upgrade the newsletter. The 1992-1993 and 1993-1994 project years were turning points for the newsletter. All aspects of producing an effective newsletter were established and balanced. The feedback during this project year, and the last, indicated that the newsletter was meeting its intended goals and was continuing to grow and increase credibility. The experience obtained from producing this publication enabled the staff to better understand the audience, to improve its content/appearance, and to adapt to changes that occur with the audience and in the workplace.

### ◆ **Time Schedule**

To ensure that the newsletter would best serve the audience, the **PASSAGE** staff had to make certain that the newsletter was written and distributed in a timely manner. Monthly schedules for writing, editing, and distributing the newsletter were established and strictly followed. The first issue of **PASSAGE** was delivered in September 1993, and the last issue was delivered in June 1994. (See Procedure for the Distribution of the Findings and the Product).

## D. Which Objectives Were Met and How?

*All goals and objectives highlighted in 1993-1994 project application were met. Specific goals and objectives included:*

1. **Providing** a timely, innovative publication that addressed the unique workplace and job-skills' needs of Pennsylvania's adult learners, especially the unemployed and underemployed. The **PASSAGE** staff made certain that each issue contained a variety of topics that would be of interest to the readers and meet all intended goals of the publication. This approach ensured that all benchmarks for the 1993-1994 newsletter project were met and reader interest was increased.

Utilizing a statewide network, experience, and research, each issue of **PASSAGE** contained at least four (4) feature articles (500 to 800 words) and at least five (5) short-interest articles (100 to 350 words). A total of one-hundred (100) articles was written during the 1993-1994 project year.

*Of the one-hundred (100) articles prepared during the 1993-1994 project year:*

- ◆ Twenty-five percent (25%) reported on job-skills' information of general application. Examples of articles included: "**PASSAGE** Book Review--Exploring Your Creative Side" (September 1993); "Improving Your Study Skills" (October 1993); "Enhancing Your Memory Skills" (January 1994); and "Overcoming The Fear of Public Speaking" (March 1994).
- ◆ Twenty percent (20%) focused on specific information about careers which have been identified for potential growth. Examples of articles included: "The Changing Workplace: New and Emerging Occupations" (December 1993); "Fastest Growing Occupations in Pennsylvania" (January 1994); "Career Opportunities In The Security Industry" (February 1994); and "Do You Love Caring For Children?" (June 1994).

- ◆ Twenty-five percent (25%) reported on job-search strategies/tools. Articles that highlighted this subject area included: "Preparing for the Interview--Open-Ended Questions" (September 1993); "Resume Writing--Take a Second Look" (November 1993); "Intensify Your Job Search" (January 1993); "Getting The Word Out" (March 1994); and "Dos and Donts For The Job Interview" (March 1993).
- ◆ Fifteen percent (15%) reported on specialty programs and services offered by **PASSAGE's** associate workplace and job-skills specialists across the Commonwealth. Articles that highlighted this subject area included: "Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center" (September 1993); "PCID: Preparing Adults For Success In The Workplace" (November 1993); "ALEX Can Help Your Job Search" (February 1994); and "**PASSAGE** Special Edition, Learning Advocates--A Schore-Fire Way To Enhance Worker Training and Educational Programs" (April 1994).
- ◆ Ten percent (10%) highlighted information on emerging technologies or vocational practices. Examples of articles included: "Exploring The Electrician's Trade" (October 1993); "The Changing Workplace: New and Emerging Occupations" (December 1993); "Job Outlook for Paralegals" (January 1994); and "The Changing Workplace: Trends and Statistics" (May 1994).
- ◆ Five percent (5%) reported on miscellaneous topics such as success stories, informational statistics, and quotes. Examples of articles included: "**PASSAGE** Success Story: A New Beginning" (September 1993); "Basic Skills In The Workplace" (November 1993); "Job Outlook for the 21st Century" (December 1993); "Who's Attending College In PA?" (January 1994); and "Motivational Quotes" (March 1994).

2. **Producing** a publication that provided unique resource/classroom materials for instructors, counselors, job trainers, and library/resource center personnel. Ten (10) specialty-exercise/activity lessons (STUDENTaccesspage or STAFFinfo page) were prepared (one per issue). This supplement provided instructors with hands-on exercises that focused on specific topics which related directly to classroom assignments. Examples of articles included: "Test-Taking...Before, During, and After" (November 1993); "Resume Writing--Using Action Words" (December 1993); "Attracting and Retaining Learning Advocates" (April 1994); and "Using Brainstorming Techniques" (May 1994).

3. **Promoting** the exchange of ideas and new approaches. Networking was promoted by highlighting innovative programs and success stories from across the State. These special services and/or individuals educate, inspire, promote awareness across the State, and encourage communication. Examples included the success stories "A New Beginning" (September 1993) and "Student Success Story" (October 1993); innovative programs such as "PCID: Preparing Adults for Success" (November 1993); and networking efforts such as the "1994 Reader Survey" (January 1994). In addition, **PASSAGE** met with instructors, volunteers, and program operators at various Regional Workshops and Summer Institutes held during the 1993-1994 project year.

4. **Introducing** a new look and design for the publication during the 1993-1994 project year. To improve the professional quality and to increase readability, **PASSAGE** used two-colors of ink (instead of one), changed the color of paper/quality of the paper, and upgraded the layout/design. The format of the newsletter consisted of:

- ◆ two (2) and three (3) columns
- ◆ front-page table of contents
- ◆ pictures and graphics
- ◆ lift-off quotes and excerpts
- ◆ sufficient white space (spacing interline/intercolumn)
- ◆ appropriate use of fonts and arrangement of body text, titles, subtitles, bullet statements, and informational text boxes
- ◆ a notebook format that encouraged readers to save volumes for future reference

In addition, the newsletter was written at a reading level that was appropriate for its audience and written specifically for its audience. Close attention was given to the length of the articles, sentences, and paragraphs; personalizing each article; vocabulary development; and the tone/personality of the publication.

5. **Encouraging** life-long education. This philosophy is needed in this ever-changing/challenging work world and was written into every issue of the **PASSAGE** newsletter. Article examples included: "What Is Employability Security" (November 1993); "Education Is The Key" (December 1993); "What It Takes To Get Promoted" (February 1994); and "Suggestions For Those Considering College" (May 1994).

6. **Serving** as a companion publication to PDE's Special Project "What's the Buzz." With different highly defined focuses, both newsletters complemented each other and provided timely information on a monthly basis to programs across the Commonwealth.

7. **Complementing** the educational, workplace, and job-skills' resource materials available through AdvancE, the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center, and ERIC. The

**PASSAGE** staff maintained contact with and utilized/supplied information to these resource centers during the 1993-1994 project year.

8. **Utilizing** staff members/volunteers, establishing a production schedule, working with a quality print shop, and having access to state-of-art computer equipment and software, the **PASSAGE** staff distributed twenty-eight hundred copies of the newsletter each month (from September to June) to educational/career-related programs across Pennsylvania. The first issue was distributed before September 30, 1993, and the last issue was distributed before June 22, 1994. Each issue was eight (8) pages in length.

## E. Which Objectives Were Not Met and Why?

All set goals and benchmarks established for the **PASSAGE** newsletter were met in a timely manner. In fact, feedback received during the project year revealed that the newsletter continues to be fully integrated into educational/career-development/job-search programs across the Commonwealth. After five (5) years of publication, awareness continues to increase on a steady basis. *However, there are some areas that the **PASSAGE** staff would like to improve in the future:*

- ◆ The use of bulk mailing is cost-effective; however, predicting when all readers receive the newsletter is difficult.
- ◆ Increased guest articles would enhance the content and credibility of the newsletter.
- ◆ Continued improvement in the areas of readability and layout/design.

## F. The Evaluation Instrument(s)/Technique(s) Used and the Results of the Evaluation(s).

To properly evaluate the success/progress of the newsletter on a monthly, quarterly, and yearly basis, the **PASSAGE** newsletter project utilized various internal and external feedback measures.

*The three primary evaluation techniques used during the project year included:*

1. **Establishing** Monthly Editorial Meetings (Internal). The purpose of the meetings was to assign articles, review feedback given from readers/staff, and ensure that all guidelines in the proposal were being followed. These internal evaluations served as a method to increase efficiency/accountability and to create an organized system for producing and improving the newsletter. **PASSAGE's** sponsoring organization, the Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee and its Board of Directors were updated on a monthly basis.

Input was received from the Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee's staff of adult instructors and career-development counselors. These individuals assisted with the writing, proofreading, and bulk mailing of the newsletter. Each issue of the newsletter was proofread by no less than four individuals. Spell-check and grammar-check programs were also utilized for reviewing and preparing the newsletter. All information presented in the newsletter was reviewed and verified for accuracy and appropriateness.

2. **Analyzing** feedback from **PASSAGE's** readers (External). In the 1993-1994 project year, a readers' survey was published in the January 1994 issue of **PASSAGE**. The survey asked the readership what information or subject areas they would like to see highlighted during the next project year, how their organizations use the newsletter, and how the newsletter can better suit their educational/career-related informational needs. Also, readers were invited to contact the **PASSAGE** staff. **PASSAGE's** Toll Free 800 Number made this a successful and convenient

method of networking with the audience and created a more personal and accessible service/product for the readership.

3. **Corresponding** with the Pennsylvania Department of Education (External). In addition to quarterly, financial, and the year-end reports, contact was maintained with the Pennsylvania Department of Education, on a regular basis, to discuss the progress of the newsletter, to review survey results, and to receive feedback. This contact was essential to improving the quality of the newsletter and to expanding the network of readers and contributors.

*Here are some brief excerpts from letters and surveys sent by program instructors, counselors, volunteers, and administrators who received the **PASSAGE** newsletter during the 1991-1992 program year.*

*"The layout of **PASSAGE** enables students to better understand and read the articles. I use some materials from **PASSAGE** as part of my employability skills' class curriculum. They have tremendously helped my students in their job-search activity."*

Makoy Beach, Director, Literacy Council of Venango County

*"The purpose of this correspondence is to commend you on your **PASSAGE** newsletter. We have been receiving this publication for some time and find the articles on career guidance to be timely and helpful."*

Mary Ann Regan, Director, Department of Labor and Industry, Bureau of Research and Statistics

*"In my position as an Organizational Relations Specialist for the Pennsylvania MILRITE Council, I have found the newsletter to be a guiding light to my work and an invaluable resource for others, and have made it a permanent part of my working library."*

Patricia J. Gustin, Organizational Relations Specialist, PA MILRITE Council

*"Several WPALRC clients have cited **PASSAGE** as their information source when requesting specific materials. These requests indicate that **PASSAGE** is an important source of information throughout Pennsylvania."*

Christine V. Kemp, Resource Specialist, Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center

*"The information is current, interesting, and extremely "news worthy". I have often copied pertinent articles for teachers and support staff to read. I have also used information found in the newsletter for the Region #1 Staff Development Newsletter."*

Bootsie Barbour, Staff Development Coordinator

"In February (1994), I had an article on careers in security published in **PASSAGE**. I felt compelled to write this article as the security industry is growing drastically, yet students and career advisors are in the dark regarding available jobs and qualifications...The newsletter has been beneficial to me as there have been occasions when I have copied articles and given them out to students in my classes."

Christopher A. Hertig, CPP, CPO; Assistant Professor; Behavioral Sciences at York College

"I would like to receive your **PASSAGE** newsletter. I work for a Supported Employment Program, which places individuals with disabilities into competitive employment. I feel that your newsletter may be very helpful to my clients."

Amy Varner, Employment Training Specialist, Easter Seals Centers

"I am pleased to write a letter of support for the continuation of the **PASSAGE** newsletter. Having received the newsletter at my office I saw the potential use to our libraries that work with the adult unemployed. I requested that **PASSAGE** be supplied to every public and state prison library that has an active library service to the adult unemployed."

Elizabeth J. Jrling, Library Development Advisor, Commonwealth Libraries

"Many of the informational articles are extremely beneficial to young mothers seeking retraining/aid and reentry into the work force."

Peg Boozel, Adult Basic Education Instructor/Career Counselor, Employment and Training Inc.

"I enjoy **PASSAGE** because, after reading it, you feel as though you have the latest, up-to-date news on the various subjects offered."

Charlotte Thompson, Volunteer Tutor of Laubach Reading and ESL Courses

"The **PASSAGE** newsletter would be of great benefit to our program. Please add our name and address to your mailing list."

Deborah Maxwell Heirmer, Instructor/Case Manager, ARIN PREP Program

"Recently a copy of your newsletter **PASSAGE** came into my hands through a business acquaintance of mine. I found it to be timely, understandable, and informative. As Coordinator of the Family Self-Sufficiency Program of the Armstrong County Housing Authority, I work with a group of adults whose goal is to become employed full-time and be independent of housing and other types of government assistance. I would very much appreciate your placing me on the mailing list for **PASSAGE**."

Sharon Petro, Assistant Project Manager, Armstrong County Housing Authority

## G. The Procedure for the Distribution of the Findings and the Product(s).

For the 1993-1994 project year, ten issues (each issue eight pages in length) of **PASSAGE** were mailed to educational/employment-related programs for adults throughout the Commonwealth. During the project year, **PASSAGE** had a monthly circulation of 2,800. The **PASSAGE** newsletter staff adhered to the following schedule to ensure that the ten (10) issues were prepared and distributed in a timely and efficient manner. The schedule began on July 1, 1993, and concluded on June 30, 1994.

*During the months of July and August, the **PASSAGE** newsletter staff:*

- ◆ Conducted research in preparing for the new issues of the publication.

*Starting on August 12, 1993, the **PASSAGE** newsletter staff:*

- ◆ Developed the editorial assignments (30 days before each issue was sent to the printer).
- ◆ Coordinated the editorial assignments (29 days before each issue went to print).
- ◆ Reviewed the rough drafts (16 days before each issue went to the printer).
- ◆ Proofread revised drafts (12 days before each issue went to print).
- ◆ Desktop published the articles into the established designs and layouts (10 days before each issue went to the printer).
- ◆ Reviewed the camera-ready proof of the newsletter (4 days before the newsletter went to print).
- ◆ Prepared bulk mailing of the newsletter and sent the newsletter to the readership (on or before the last week of the month).
- ◆ Updated the mailing list (monthly basis).

The **PASSAGE** mailing list was established from:

- ◆ Networking with various programs across the Commonwealth (e.g., Regional Workshops and Mid-Winter Conference).
- ◆ Word of mouth from **PASSAGE**'s readers (instructors, program operators, counselors, and volunteers).
- ◆ Advertising from PDE publications such as "What's The Buzz" and "Freebies for ABLE." (During **PASSAGE**'s start-up in 1989, the Pennsylvania Department of Education and "What's the Buzz" provided many of the initial names and addresses.)
- ◆ **PASSAGE**'s project advisor from the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

The newsletter was researched, written, edited, designed, and formatted by the **PASSAGE** staff. The Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee's staff and volunteers assisted with the bulk mailing and the proof reading. The camera-ready copies of the newsletter produced by the **PASSAGE** staff were sent to a the Western Instructional Support Center's print shop in Gibsonia, Pennsylvania, for mass production and folding.

To improve the timeliness and to increase efficiency, various software packages (Corel Ventura Publisher 4.0, WordPerfect 6.0, RightWriter, ImageBase, and Marstek Scankit) were used to write, edit, and design the newsletters.

The combination of an experienced staff, state-of-the-art software/hardware, a quality print shop, an efficient data-base management, and a monthly schedule enabled **PASSAGE** to distribute the product in a timely and efficient manner.

## H. Conclusion/Recommendations

The 1993-1994 **PASSAGE** project has met all set goals and has continued to expand its network of readers and contributors, to improve its layout/design, and to respond to the various needs of the audience. Upon completion of its fifth year of publication, the **PASSAGE** newsletter continues to provide a unique product for its target audience of adult learners, unemployed/underemployed individuals, adult instructors/counselors, programs directors, and employment/career-guidance trainers in Pennsylvania. Lastly, **PASSAGE** continues to complement the many programs and services funded and supported by the Pennsylvania Department of Education.

Based on the feedback from the 1993-1994 project year and from previous years, the **PASSAGE** staff is confident that the newsletter has met and often exceeded its intended goals. In addition, based on economic factors and the changing workplace, **PASSAGE's** sponsoring agency, the Beaver County Area Labor-Management Committee, and its Board of Directors support and encourage the continuance of this newsletter project in the future.

## *In This Issue...*

- > Many Employers Encourage Risk Taking (Page Two)
- > Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center (Page Three)
- > "I Really Like The Job You're Doing" (Page Three)
- > PASSAGE Book Review: Exploring Your Creative Side (Page Four)
- > PASSAGE Welcomes Your Input (Page Four)
- > STUDENTaccesspage: Choosing a School (Page Five)
- > Success Story: A New Beginning (Page Six)
- > How Does The Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 Affect You? (Page Seven)

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## Preparing for the Interview: Open-Ended Questions



With the increase in the number of small businesses in the United States, employers are taking more steps to be certain that all new hires are "right" for the company. To help improve their chances of finding the best new employees, employers are asking interview questions that are more specific to each particular job.

In today's workworld, each individual truly affects the success of the organization, and employers do not want to spend a great deal of time replacing employees who were not appropriate for their jobs. By designing custom-made questions, employers are dealing effectively with this issue and are recruiting the best individual for each job opening.

*To better prepare yourself for the interview situation, review the*

*following tips before each scheduled interview:*

- Know what skills/abilities are needed in your career field. The interviewer will be expecting to hear about them during the interview. For example, a customer-service representative would be required to have excellent people and communication skills, and a salesperson would need to be a self-starter, energetic, and able to work without direct supervision.
- Do not expect the interviewer to always lead you. In many cases, he/she will be as vague as possible (providing little clues as to the appropriate answers). They want to see what you know and learn more about your abilities and attitude.

*Continued on page 2*

# Many Employers Encourage Risk Taking

Does management at companies in your area encourage more or less risk-taking among employees than it did three years ago? In an Accountemps' survey, a similar question was asked of 200 executives from the nation's 1,000 largest companies.

*Their responses to this question were:*

- More.....69%
- Less.....22%
- Same/Unsure.....9%

What is the reason for the large percentage of employers who encourage risk taking? Basically, these employers realize that, in order for their businesses to succeed, they have to give employees more responsibilities and to increase risk taking. Risk taking helps companies develop new ideas, products, and services and often increases productivity and efficiency. Also, this approach can challenge and motivate employees.



*What exactly is risk taking? In most work environments, risk taking is:*

- Being unafraid of making a mistake.
- Having the courage to try new ideas and voice your opinions. Staff meetings or suggestion boxes are provided for this reason.
- Maximizing your communication skills.
- Improving your skills/abilities and being concerned about the success of your company.

- Utilizing your creativity to find new and better ways of getting a job completed.
- Being able to sell your ideas (self-motivation).
- Conducting the appropriate research to eliminate shortcomings or obvious risks.
- Accepting responsibility for your efforts (good or bad).
- Creating new job roles or responsibilities for yourself.

*Risk taking is not about:*

- Taking action without much thought (being hasty or impulsive).
- Doing your manager's job.

Today's employee cannot afford to "just punch the clock." The success of a company and its employees depends on them changing and growing, and risk taking is one important ingredient in this ongoing process. □

## *Preparing for the Interview...Continued from Page One*

- Be prepared to provide more than just "yes" or "no" answers; be sure to go into some detail. Have your answers prepared in advance and practice your responses. Ask yourself, "What position am I applying for?" and "What are the day-to-day requirements?" Some interview questions will always remain the same (experience, education, and availability); however, depending on the job, many companies will have different/more specific questions which will require detailed answers. For example, if you are applying for a position as a salesperson, the interviewer may ask, "How would you handle a customer who returns a product after the warranty date?" or "How would you convince the customer that our product is the best choice for his/her particular needs?"
- Realize that the interviewer wants you to do a great deal of the talking. (Please don't talk for sake of hearing yourself talk.) Make certain that you stay on track. This means giving complete answers that include a few examples of your accomplishments through your experience and/or education.
- Be aware that a knowledgeable interviewer will listen closely to your answers. Your answers often reveal much about your personality and your ability to complete the job. Your answers can provide the employer with clues about your motivation level, work ethic, energy level, and interpersonal skills. [Also, your body language or non-verbal signs (appearance and actions) send messages to the interviewer.] □

# Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center

The new Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center was established to provide consultation, technical assistance, and access to state-of-the-art research and information for adult education and literacy administrators, teachers, tutors, counselors, and the Pennsylvania Department of Education's staff throughout Western Pennsylvania. The Resource Center serves as a satellite office of AdvancE, the Pennsylvania Department of Education's Resource Center.

#### *Resources available include:*

- **Information Access Center** - Access to current research, information, and literature through the use of computerized databases and interlibrary loan.
- **353 Project Reports/Products** - Dissemination of 353 project reports and products. Information about these projects is disseminated annually in the Adult Education Special Projects Abstract booklet.
- **Shelf Collection** - Collection of the latest print and audio visual materials for classroom use, teacher preparation, professional development, grant writing, and fund raising. Materials, including video and software, may be borrowed for four weeks. Requests for materials are accepted in person, by mail, or by telephone. Also, both IBM and Macintosh software may be previewed at the center.

#### *Technical services available include:*

- **Teleconferences/TV Production Studio** - Production facilities and uplink satellite capability for state-wide and national teleconferences are available on a pay-per-use basis through the Western Instructional Support Center (WISC).
- **Graphics Department** - This department creates documents such as brochures, manuals, handouts, overheads, newsletters, directories, stationery, business cards, and invitations.
- **Print Shop** - The print shop has four offset printing presses, a high-speed copier, and finishing equipment.

- **Meeting Rooms** - Training centers and meeting rooms are available on a first-come first-serve basis.

In the areas of training, career-development, and job-search strategies, the center has a wide variety of books, videos, and computer programs on topics such as: personal development, training, life skills, job world, study skills, workplace trends, job-search campaign, and securing employment.

*For more information or to schedule a visit, call 1-800-446-5607 Ext. 216 (Toll Free) or write to: Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center, 5347 William Flynn Highway, Route 8, Gibsonia, PA 15044-9644. □*

## "I Really Like The Job You're Doing!"



Few people realize the positive effects of being comfortable with praise. Everyone, whether he/she admits it or not, appreciates hearing, "Hey, great job," or "Thanks for your help; I couldn't have done it without you!" Workers need to learn how to give and accept praise.

#### *Consider the following suggestions:*

- When you are at work, let your fellow coworkers know if they are doing a good job. This will promote a cooperative workplace, and your positive efforts will eventually be returned to you.
- When you are giving or receiving praise, be honest and sincere (people can sense when praise is being used to set them up for a favor). Use this powerful motivation tool for the right reasons.
- When you receive praise accept it with pride. Don't be embarrassed or ashamed to acknowledge this compliment. Let the praise motivate you. □

# PASSAGE Book Review: Exploring Your Creative Side

Creativity is a skill that everyone has, but few people learn to develop this skill to its true potential. Creativity can help you on your job, in the classroom, with your family/personal life, and with your hobbies. If you are interested in exploring/developing your creative side, the PASSAGE staff recommends the following books.

## **A Whack on the Side of the Head: How You Can Be More Creative**

Author Roger von Oech explores a variety of techniques you can use everyday to unlock your "creative warrior." The author is the founder/president of Creative Think, a company that specializes in stimulating creativity through seminars, consulting, and products.

This book, which was first published in 1983, continues to grow in popularity and can benefit anyone (from students to business professionals to parents).



"A Whack on the Side of the Head" uses innovative puzzles, exercises, questions, stories, tips, and anecdotes to awaken the sleeping creative giant within all of us.

Some of the many topics covered in the book include opening mental locks, learning how to think, understanding the creative process, making the strange familiar, becoming an explorer, cultivating an idea, learning from mistakes, and listening to your dreams.

"A Whack on the Side of the Head" is published by Creative Think, Box 7354 Menlo Park, California 94026, and can be

found at your local book store or library.

## **C and the Box: A Paradigm Parable**

Author Frank A. Prince uses an entertaining story to show the benefits of stepping out the familiar (old habits), exploring new areas, taking risks, and striving to improve ones abilities. This tale can be used in the classroom setting, by professionals in training sessions, and even for personal enhancement.

Frank Prince is vice president and founder of the consulting firm, Involvement Systems, Inc. He helps companies improve organizational productivity through the use of experiential and inventive learning techniques.

"C and the Box: A Paradigm Parable" is published by Pfeiffer & Company, 8517 Production Avenue, San Diego, California 92121-2280. □

## **PASSAGE Welcomes Your Input**

This issue marks the beginning of our fifth year in publication. Currently, PASSAGE has a monthly circulation of 2800 readers in Pennsylvania. Our readers consist of adult learners, unemployed/underemployed individuals, single parents, homemakers, and educational/training professionals.

*In an effort to improve the content and appearance of the newsletter, we would greatly appreciate your comments. Perhaps you have...*

- A special program or service that you believe could benefit the PASSAGE readership.
- A topic that you would like to see highlighted in the newsletter.

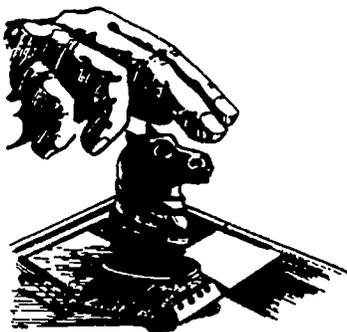
- A student success story that would be inspirational to individuals with similar situations/challenges.

The PASSAGE staff would really like to hear from you. Call 1-800-345-5443 or write to PASSAGE Newsletter, BCALMC, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, PA 15027.

### **PASSAGE Staff**

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### Taking The First Step

For adults who are considering career options or wanting to enter a new field of work, choosing the appropriate school or training institution is an important and

often difficult step to make. Many factors such as time, money, family commitments, and personal goals have to be explored.

If you have considered the idea of continuing your education, this list can serve a guideline and question form to be used when you research and visit colleges or training institutions.

### Are internships/externships available in your area of focus?

In addition to classroom credits, internships provide valuable, first-hand experience and provide a new network of professional contacts for the student. In addition to education, employers greatly value work experience. This will give you an advantage over other applicants who have no direct/hands-on experience.

### Is the institution accredited?

Accredited institutions are training schools that have been approved by an official board and have been recognized as quality institutions. This factor will not only affect the type/quality of education you receive--it will be an influential factor when a potential employer is considering you for employment. Some examples of career fields that place importance on an education from an accredited school include careers in the health-care profession and the food-service industry.

### What special programs or scheduling options are offered for adult students?

If you are working and/or raising a family, scheduling will be a concern for you. Ask school representatives if evening and Saturday classes are available. Also, ask if the institutions offer credit for CLEP examinations (see May 1993 PASSAGE) or offer home courses. In addition to convenience, these approaches can often "speed up" the process of receiving your degree or certification.

### What funding assistance is available?

Find out if the school or training program can help you obtain financial assistance. State and federal sources offer three types of assistance: grants, College Work-Study programs, and loans. The grant is financial assistance that students are not required to pay back at a future date. The College Work Study program provides students with the opportunity to work and earn an income to help pay for their educational expenses. A loan is money that is borrowed by the student, and the money must be paid back, with interest, at a later date.

Also, you should explore scholarships offered by organizations in your area and state or federal job-search/career development services such as your local Job Training Partnership Act program.

### Does the institution have job-search and job-placement assistance?

Find out what programs or classes are available to help you prepare for your job search (interviewing skills and resume/cover letter preparation). In addition, see what services are available to help you network and contact potential employers. (Ask about their placement rate for recent graduates.)

### Are day-care services available?

Some schools offer child-care services for students. This can reduce a great deal of scheduling/family related stress that occurs when attending school. This is not common with all training institutions, but check to see if this service is available.

### Are tutoring services provided?

Many colleges and vocational schools offer free tutoring services. If you are having difficulty in a course, tutors (usually paid students) can help you make the extra effort needed to succeed and help you stay on track for graduation.

### How long will it take for you to graduate?

Before you make your decision, find out the amount of time (semesters), credits, and required classes needed to graduate from a particular school or program. Make sure you know what to expect, this will reduce stress and save time/money. □



# PASSAGE Success Story: A New Beginning

By Delores L. Howland, Vice President for Education, Nationalities Service Center

Meet Ms. Tsegenesh Bahta Reta, a young woman who came to Philadelphia as a refugee in 1984. She was born in Ethiopia in 1965. To escape the political upheavals, the internecine warfare, and life threatening conditions that prevailed in Ethiopia during the years that followed, her family fled to the Sudan in 1975. Tsegenesh was not yet 10 years old.

Her early education in both Ethiopia and the Sudan was meager—a total of three years. Although her parents were illiterate and questioned the value of an education for a girl, Tsegenesh, at very early age, became aware of the importance of literacy and an education. She was determined to go to school, get an education, learn, and help improve the quality of her own life and her family's life. In both Ethiopia (her native country) and the Sudan (the first country of refuge), the culture discouraged education for girls/women especially if they were married.

Tsegenesh's first marriage was when she was only 14 years old. Despite the bleak outlook for obtaining an education, her dedication and respect for learning did not waver. She was ridiculed by her family and friends and by her husband's peers for permitting his wife to attend school. She stated, "They think education makes women change their thinking...makes women be bad wives."

Once in the United States, Tsegenesh believed that her



Ms. Tsegenesh Bahta Reta

situation would change and that she would be able to achieve the goals she had set for herself—to learn English in order to get a job and/or enter a job training program. She read that there are greater opportunities for women in the United States. Nonetheless, it would take five years before she could actively pursue her goals.

Tsegenesh is tri-lingual, i.e., she speaks Amharic, Tigre, and Arabic. However, she was only literate in Amharic, her first language, and she lacked basic reading/writing skills in all three languages.

Language and cultural barriers in the United States were even more difficult to overcome than they had been in the Sudan. The rudimentary literacy skills she had in Amharic were not transferable to English.

(Amharic is a non-Roman alphabet language.) In addition to the problem of learning a new and vastly different language, she felt the pressing need to adapt/orient to a complex society whose customs, culture, and values were also very different. This situation was further exacerbated by personal,

marital, psychological, and health problems.

During this period of change, Tsegenesh's second marriage failed. She now had two children to support and raise, while suffering periods of disorientation, depression, isolation, confusion, and frustration during the first years in her new country. However, the spirit of this petite, energetic, and highly motivated woman could not be kept down. She found counseling; her life became more orderly; and the goals of learning English and getting a job were renewed.

In 1989, Tsegenesh came to the Nationalities Service Center (NSC) to enroll in the English as a Second Language (ESL) Program. In June of this year, she completed the Advanced II ESL level (highest of 8 levels). Her speaking/listening skills are very good. However, she is aware that her reading/writing skills must be improved in order to achieve her goals—getting training and a job.

Today, Tsegenesh's life is stable. Her daughters will both be in school in the fall, and she is ready to go forward. She will enroll in NSC's GED/ESL Program in September. This program is funded in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education, Adult Basic and Literacy Education, and integrates GED content, the five subjects, into the framework of ESL methodology. It is especially designed for persons, who are not native speakers of English but is open to all persons who are able to benefit

*Continued on page 7*

# How Does the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 Affect You?

On August 5, 1993, the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 (FMLA) went into effect. If you are employed or are seeking employment, you should be familiar with your potential rights and responsibilities as an employee under this Act. Also, you should be aware of your employer's obligations/rights.



The following list provides a summary of the FMLA and how it affects employees/employers.

## Purpose of the FMLA

The United States Congress passed the Family and Medical Leave Act of 1993 with the hopes of balancing the demands of the workplace with the needs of families; improving/ maintaining the stability and economic security of families; granting employees the right to request a leave from employment for medical reasons, for the birth/adoption of a child, and care of a child, spouse, or parent who has a serious health condition; and promoting the goal of equal employment opportunity for women and men.

*Many factors convinced the members of Congress to pass the FMLA. Their findings indicated that:*

- The number of single-parent households and two-parent households in which the single parent or both parents work is increasing significantly.

- It is important for the development of children and the family unit that fathers and mothers be able to participate in early childrearing and the care of family members who have serious health conditions.

- The lack of employment policies to accommodate working parents can force individuals to choose between job security and parenting.

- There is inadequate job security for employees who have serious health conditions that prevent them from working for temporary periods.
- Often the primary responsibility for family caretaking is provided by women, and this responsibility affects the working lives of women more than it affects the working lives of men.

## What exactly does the FMLA require of employers and employees?

The FMLA requires private sector employers with 50 or more employees and public agencies to provide up to 12 weeks of unpaid, job-protected leave to "eligible" employees for certain family and medical situations. To be eligible, an employee needs to work for an employer for at least one year and for 1,250 hours of service with the employer during the previous 12 months. Also, there must be at least 50 employees within 75 miles of the company.

*Continued on page 8*

## *A New Beginning...Continued from Page Six*

and who are in need of a diploma to pursue personal, educational/ employment goals.

When saying farewell, Tsegenesh remarked, "I am proud of the American people...they help me pay rent, buy food and clothes for my girls...I will pay them back when I get my job. I want to say, 'Thank You,' to America for a new life and mind and the opportunity to go to school and improve myself." Right-On, Tsegenesh!

### More Information on Nationalities Service Center

The Nationalities Service Center (NSC) is a United Way agency that has been providing educational and social services for over 72 years. Services available at NSC include:

- Easing transition from another country to the United States.
- Representing and protecting all immigrants and refugees.
- Reuniting families.
- Establishing programs that help build self-esteem.
- Providing services for the elderly.
- Offering educational programs (ESL and GED).
- Contributing to intergroup understanding.

NSC, 1300 Spruce Street, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19107 (215) 893-8400 □

## What are acceptable reasons for employees to take leave under the FMLA?

Under the FMLA, an employer must approve unpaid leave to an eligible employee for one or more of the following reasons:

- For the care of the employee's child (birth, or placement or adoption or foster care);
- For the care of the employee's spouse, son or daughter, or parent, who has a serious health condition; or,
- For a serious health condition that makes the employee unable to perform his/her job.

*In addition, an employee or an employer has the option to substitute certain types of paid leave for unpaid leave.*

## What advanced notice or documentation must be provided by the employee?

The employee must, in most cases, provide 30 days advance notice when the leave is to be expected to begin. An employee should be prepared to provide the employer with medical certification to support a request for leave because of a health condition.

## Is it possible to request part-time leave from an eligible employer?

An employee may take intermittent leave or may work a reduced leave schedule to reduce the usual number of hours per day during the work week. Intermittent or reduced leave schedules are subject to employer approval unless medically necessary.

## Are jobs, benefits, and medical insurance coverage protected under the FMLA?

Upon returning from FMLA leave, most employees must be returned to their original or equivalent

positions with equivalent pay, benefits, and other employment terms.

The use of FMLA leave cannot result in the loss of any employment benefit that is earned before the start of an employee's leave.

For the duration of FMLA leave, the employer must maintain the employee's medical insurance coverage under any "group plan," under the conditions coverage would have been provided if the employee had continued working.

## What if an employer violates the guidelines present in the FMLA?

An eligible employee may bring a civil action against an employer for violations. In fact, the FMLA makes it unlawful for any employer to:

- Interfere with or refuse an eligible employee the rights provided under the FMLA.
- Discharge or discriminate against any person for opposing any practice made unlawful by FMLA.

In addition, employers must post a notice approved by the Secretary of Labor explaining rights and responsibilities under the FMLA.

## For More Information...



*Please contact the nearest office of the Wage and Hour Division listed in most telephone directories under U.S. Government, Department of Labor, Employment Standards Administration or contact your Congressman's District Office. □*

*Source: U.S. Department of Labor, FMLA Summary*

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*The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.*

## Keep The Customer Satisfied.

Who is responsible for customer service? Is management entirely responsible?--No. Are the workers entirely responsible?--No, again. Actually, the correct answer is everyone should be responsible. Customer service can make or break a company--especially in today's work environment.



To provide a better understanding of the importance of customer service, let's look at the effects of poor customer service.

**Communication Briefings** recently surveyed 402 business executives to rate the overall quality of customer service of companies in the United States.

*The study revealed that:*

- 48% of the executives surveyed rated most companies' customer service as fair to poor.
- 44% of the individuals stopped conducting business with three to five companies in 1992, because of poor customer service.
- 10% of the individuals responding stopped

conducting business with more than five companies in 1992, because of this problem.

- 3% of the business executives surveyed stated they did not switch companies at all.

The results clearly reveal the negative effects of poor customer service. Also, one can easily understand why an employer would be interested in these findings, but why should these findings be of interest to job seekers or employees?

In most cases, workers or employees (individuals who do not hold management positions) are still accustomed to believing that addressing these concerns is entirely the managers' responsibility. However, today's employees have to understand how their actions affect not only their jobs but also their companies' success.

If you are presently interested in obtaining a job that requires contact with the public, consider the following tips that focus on the importance of meeting and

*Continued on page 2*

# Workplace Trends and Statistics

## Women in the Workplace



> Recently, the Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry's Bureau of Research and Statistics reported that more women in Pennsylvania, 16 years of age or older, are holding or seeking paying jobs. Their participation in the labor force rose from about 46 percent in 1980 to 53 percent in 1990 and is projected to be over 60 percent in the year 2000.

- > According to Dartnell's 27th Sales Force Compensation Survey, women now represent 26% of the sales people in the United States. In 1982, women represented only less than 7% of the nation's sales force. Examples of women salespeople represented in the work force include hotel and lodging (73%), communications (51.2%), health services (49.8%), office services (41%), consumer services (40.4%), office equipment (39%), business services (36.3%), and insurance (33.2%).

## The Future Work Force



> Edward E. Gordon, president of Imperial Corporate Training and Development in Oak Lawn, Illinois and author

of "The Need for Work Force Education" (Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, P.O. Box 789, Bloomington, Indiana) states, "The chief competitive advantage for any nation in the 21st Century will be its skilled work force." In addition, he adds, "In 1991, the U.S. Department of Commerce concluded that a \$300 billion annual productivity loss was caused by an undereducated work force. It now takes nearly three years to achieve the same growth in productivity that we used to achieve in one year."

- > Statistics from the National Planning Association state that 45 million people in the United States are working as part-timers, temporaries or consultants, or are self-employed. These people represent more than a third of the American work force. (Reasons: pressures from the economy and competition, the need to control rising costs, and a more diverse work force.)

## Working At Home



> According to "Myths and Realities of Working At Home," a study that was prepared for the Small Business

Administration, the number of home-based businesses grew from 3.6 million in 1985 to more than 5.6 million in 1991. Reasons for this increase include technological advances, use of outside contractors by business, and companies that have downsized. The report also stated that 33 percent of the current work force spends some time each week performing office work at home during normal business hours.

## Stress



> The total cost of stress to American business is roughly \$300 billion a year, according to Dr. Paul

Rosch, president of the American Institute of Stress. (This cost includes workers' compensation, lost productivity, absenteeism, and training new workers.) □

## "Customer" Continued From Page One

exceeding the needs of the customer:

- Know your job and the mission/purpose of your company. This sounds fairly obvious, but the truth is that many employees are not aware of what happens outside of their own departments. Knowledge of your employer's history, customers, and goals, and the steps or processes involved in getting a quality product or service to the customer are important. Customers lose confidence in employees who lack knowledge.
- Understand the importance of a promise and following a schedule. If you set a definite time to deliver a product/service to a customer, schedule a meeting with a client, or prepare a price quote for the potential buyer, make certain that you meet all deadlines. Customers are busy, and their success depends partly on your ability to provide a product/service in a timely manner. If you have a scheduling problem, keep the customer notified and avoid last minute schedule changes.
- Treat the customer with respect. In addition to the quality, price, and reliability of your company's products and services, customers appreciate and look for consistent and respectful attitudes and behaviors from you (good service). When dealing with the public, you should try to make the customer feel important. Be courteous at all times ("The customer is always right."); listen closely to the concerns of the customer; and treat the customer the way you would expect to be treated if the roles were reversed. □

# Exploring the Electrician's Trade

Whenever homes, factories, offices, and other structures need to be constructed or renovated, electricians are the individuals responsible for installing and maintaining electrical devices and wiring. The electrical systems installed by electricians are needed for providing light, power, air-conditioning, refrigeration, security, communications, and electronic controls for machines

As long as individuals depend on electricity for completing their everyday activities (work and leisure), electricians will always be needed and valued members of the work force.

This article will provide a brief overview of the job duties, work environment, educational/training requirements, job outlook, and earnings for individuals interested in becoming electricians. Use this article as a starting point for researching and exploring this career possibility.

## Job Description

Most electricians specialize in either construction or maintenance.

Electricians who specialize in construction work use blueprints to install electrical systems in new buildings. The blueprint serves as the "road map" and indicates the location of circuits, outlets, load centers, panel boards, and other equipment. When installing electrical systems, electricians must follow the National Electric Code and the State and local building codes.



*Job duties for installing electrical systems include:*

- Placing conduit (pipe or tubing) inside partitions or walls (areas that are concealed).
- Fastening small metal or plastic boxes that will contain electrical switches and outlets.
- Sending insulated wires or cables through a conduit to complete circuits (make a connection) between boxes.
- Connecting wire to circuit breakers, transformers, and other components (splicing or soldering wires).
- Testing circuits for proper connections.

In addition to electrical systems, electricians often install cable for telecommunication and computer equipment or connect motors to electrical power and install electronic controls for industrial equipment.

The job duties for electricians who specialize in maintenance vary depending on their employer. Electricians who focus on residential maintenance work often rewire homes and replace old fuse boxes with new circuit breakers to accommodate additional

appliances. Those who work in large factories may repair motors, transformers, generators, and electronic controllers on machine tools and industrial robots. Lastly, electricians working in small plants or office buildings repair a variety of electronic equipment.

*Job duties for maintaining electrical systems can include:*

- Inspecting equipment and locating problems before breakdowns occur.
- Replacing items such as circuit breakers, fuses, switches, electrical/electronic components, or wiring.
- Completing repairs in a timely manner to avoid a further loss of productivity.
- Working with engineers, engineering technicians, or industrial-machinery repairers.
- Advising management when continued operation of equipment could be hazardous.

## Tools of the Trade

Electricians use hand tools such as screwdrivers, pliers, knives, and hacksaws. They also use power tools, soldering guns, and testing equipment such as oscilloscopes, ammeters, and test lamps.

## Work Environment

A career as an electrician can be challenging and difficult. Often electricians stand or work in

*Continued on page 6*

Continued from page 5

cramped positions for long periods of time. Sometimes the job requires working on ladders and scaffolds.

Safety is an important factor. Individuals in this trade risk injury from electrical shock, falls, and cuts. Electricians must follow strict safety procedures.

Most electricians work a standard 40-hour work week and may be required to work overtime. Also, many maintenance electricians work evening hours/weekends and are on call if emergencies occur.

### **Educational/Training Requirements**

The most effective method of learning the electrical trade is by completing a four- or five-year apprenticeship. The apprenticeship gives trainees a thorough knowledge of all aspects of the trade and improves their ability to find a job.

Large apprenticeship programs are usually sponsored by joint-training committees made up of local unions of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and local chapters of the National Electrical Contractors Association. Training may also be provided by company management committees of individual electrical contracting companies and by local chapters of the Associated Builders and Contractors and Independent Electrical Contractors. On the job, under the supervision of experienced electricians, apprentices must demonstrate mastery of the electrician's work.

This type of training qualifies individuals to do both

maintenance and construction work. Most large apprenticeship programs provide:

- 144 hours of classroom instruction a year.
- 8,000 hours of on-the-job training over the course of the apprenticeship.
- Training in blueprint reading, electrical theory, electronics, mathematics, electrical code requirements, and safety/first aid practices.

Others who do not enter a formal apprenticeship program often learn the trade from an experienced electrician and also attend a trade school.

All individuals interested in this field should have a high school or GED diploma. High school courses in mathematics, electricity, electronics, mechanical drawing, science, and shop provide a good foundation for this trade.

Upon completion of training, most electricians are required to be licensed. To obtain a license, electricians must pass an exam that tests their knowledge of electrical theory, the National Electrical Code, and local electric/building codes.

### **Job Opportunities**

In 1990, electricians held about 548,000 jobs. More than half were employed in the construction industry, and others worked as maintenance workers in nearly every type of industry. Also, one out of ten electricians was self-employed.

Employment of electricians is expected to increase faster than the average for all occupations through the year 2005. Factors that will increase the need for electricians include population

growth, new technologies, and the number of retirements.

While overall employment is expected to be good, construction electricians should be prepared for periods of unemployment which result from the set amount of time needed on each project and the economic conditions. In most cases, the maintenance electricians' employment stability is better than construction electricians.

Finally, job opportunities vary depending on the geographical area. Relocation may have to be a consideration for individuals interested in this trade.

### **Earnings**

Apprentices usually receive 38 to 50 percent of the rate paid to experienced electricians, and as they become more skilled, the rate increases. Full-time electricians earned between \$297 (the lowest 10%) to \$838 (the highest 10%) per week. (Experience, education, geographic location, overtime, and type of employer affect the earning levels reported.)

### **Where To Start...**

If you are interested in learning more about apprenticeships or other work opportunities in this trade, contact local electrical contractors; local chapters of the Independent Electrical Contractors, Inc., the National Electrical Contractors Association, or the Associated Builders and Contractors; a local union of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; or the nearest service or State apprenticeship agency.

Source: *America's Top 300 Jobs, Based on the U.S. Department of Labor's Occupational Outlook Handbook.* □

# STUDENTaccesspage Focus: Improving Your Study Skills

This month's STUDENTaccesspage provides some useful tips to help you focus on your educational goals, set a study schedule, sharpen your study skills, and reach your goals.

## Ask yourself what you want to accomplish.

When you are studying or brushing-up your skills, establish a set of goals you want to achieve. Depending on your situation, some examples of goals may include passing the GED tests, graduating from a college or technical school, or improving your basic skills for employment opportunities. The main idea is to have something to work towards. Establishing a goal, or goals, will help motivate and inspire you when you are expanding your educational horizons. What are your goals?

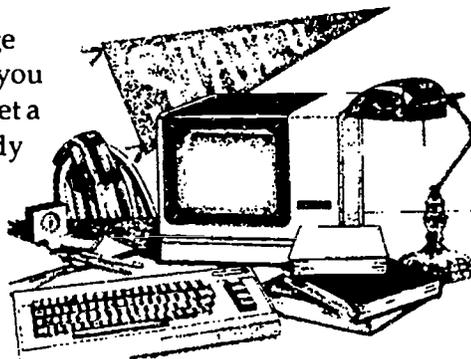
## Know why each subject you study is important to your future.

Whether you are studying math, science, English, or social studies for the GED tests or are taking college-level courses such as college writing, philosophy, or public speaking, you need to understand how each course will benefit you in the workplace and in your personal life.

For example, let's look at the importance of math skills. Here is a list of ways math can help you in many aspects of life.

*Developing solid math skills can help you with:*

- **Improving your employment opportunities.** Aside from careers that obviously require math skills (cashier, bank teller, accountant, engineer, etc.), math skills may also be needed on the job for calculating your mileage/daily expenses if you are required to travel, submitting purchase orders, or following a budget which was established by your supervisor.
- **Balancing your weekly and monthly budget and your checkbook or preparing your income tax.**
- **Obtaining the basic knowledge needed to handle the financial responsibilities of operating your own business or managing a franchise.**



When you make an effort to realize how important each subject will be to your future, you will be more determined to study and reach your goals. Even if you do not like a particular subject, get into the habit of reminding yourself why you need to be familiar with each subject of study.

(You never know what the future holds in store and what skills you will need to be successful.)

## Prepare a schedule.

Purchase or make a daily planner/appointment calendar. Design a daily schedule that will help you meet all of your goals. In your schedule book, set aside definite times for studying, work, family duties, personal activities, and relaxing. Your schedule may look something like this:

### *Monday, November 1, 1993*

*(7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.)*

Review math assignments: percentages and fractions.

*(9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)* Work

*(6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.)*

Attend GED brush-up course at local library.

*(9:00 p.m.)* Spend time with the family.

### *Tuesday, November 2, 1993*

*(7:00 a.m. to 8:00 a.m.)*

Review math assignment on mixed fractions and write outline for essay assignment.

*(9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)* Work

*(5:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m.)*

Relax and spend time with the family.

*(7:30 p.m. to 9:30 p.m.)* Household chores

*(9:30 p.m. to 10:30 p.m.)*

Start preparing a rough draft of essay.

### *Wednesday, November 3, 1993*

*(7:00 a.m. to 8:30 a.m.)*

Meet GED study group at coffee shop.

*(9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.)* Work

*(6:00 p.m. to 8:30 p.m.)* Attend GED class.

*(9:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.)* Go bowling.

*Continued on page 4*

## *STUDENTaccesspage--Focus: Improving Your Study Skills Continued*

Be realistic. Know when you have scheduled too much and when you can push yourself to do better. Experiment until you find a schedule that works for your situation. Once you find something that works, follow it on a daily basis. (As you are going through this process, always keep your mind set on your goals and priorities.)

### **Avoid Interruptions.**

Find a place that is quiet and will provide you with the opportunity to concentrate on your work.

Some people prefer to study at home; some like to go to the library. Be creative. To avoid unneeded interruptions, let your family or friends know that this quiet time is important to you.

### **Take one step at a time.**

When you are studying a subject, make an effort to understand the main ideas, supporting ideas, and examples and how they relate to each other. For example, perhaps you were studying effective methods of conducting a job search to obtain employment. The main idea or subject would be, of course, Conducting a Job Search to Obtain Employment. A supporting idea or topic would be Preparing a Resume. Subtopics for Preparing a Resume could include Skills Assessment, Chronological Resumes, and Functional Resumes.

By going from the main idea (general) to subtopics and examples (specific details), you can move in an organized and logical manner and connect related information together. Use this outline format when you study and take one step at a time. You will have a better understanding of the material, and you will not become overwhelmed.

### **Don't try to study everything at once.**

Instead of spending all night studying a subject before the test, try reviewing material as it is

assigned to you. When you get home from class, take a little time that day to review the material and reinforce what you have learned. At the end of the week, scan what you have learned. (The longer you wait after receiving information, the more you forget.) By taking this approach, you will be able to retain more information, and you won't have to jam three-weeks' worth of lessons in your head the night before a test. All you will need to do is refresh your memory.

### **Learn to listen and participate.**

When you are attending a class, you should make an effort to be an active member of the class. This means knowing when to listen to the instructor (taking notes and eliminating distractions) and when to participate (asking/answering questions and adding your view/points). Interest and success increase when you are an involved participant.

### **Know when you need assistance.**

Some subjects are more difficult than others and require a little more effort. If you are having difficulty, do not be embarrassed to ask the instructor or class members for assistance or to seek the help of a tutor. Another approach that is effective is organizing a study group of students who are interested in working together to learn material and to support each other. Never be afraid to ask for assistance.

### **Be good to yourself.**

In addition to having a routine and exercising your brain, you also need to exercise your body, eat healthy meals, and get enough sleep. Don't underestimate the importance of staying physically fit while working towards mental fitness. Your body and your mind need to work together if you want to improve your study skills. □

## **How Can You Keep Your Job?**

*Here is a list of simple steps you can take to improve your employment security:*

- Be punctual.
- Dress appropriately for your place of work.
- List skills and abilities on your resume that are factual.
- Be honest with your employer and coworkers.
- Make an effort to get along with your coworkers.
- Know your job description and who your bosses are.
- Do not take advantage of sick days.
- Avoid using work time for personal business.
- Work at a pace that is appropriate for completing the job successfully.
- Follow workplace safety rules.
- Understand the dangers of alcohol and drugs and how they can affect work performance and safety.
- Accept responsibility and grow with the company. □

# PASSAGE Student Success Story

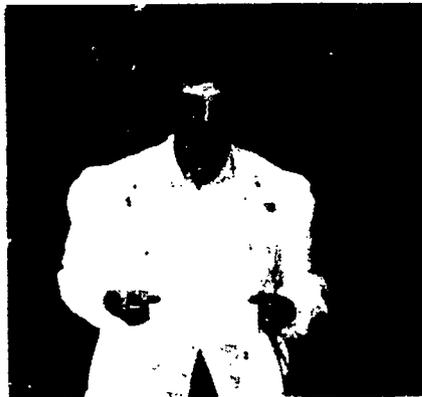
*By Patrick Boland, Employment and Training Coordinator, AYS, Inc., Ebensburg, PA*

Rose is one super lady. She is 54 years old and wanted so desperately to get her GED diploma. This is the story of how she earned her GED diploma, achieved a significant goal, and proved something very important to herself. Rose is an inspiration to people of all ages who want to improve their educational opportunities.

A good place to start would be to look at why she quit school in the first place. In high school, Rose was scheduled with a home economics teacher who changed her attitude about school. Unfortunately, instead of the teacher supporting her in her pursuits, Rose was discouraged and was constantly singled out in class. The teacher was quite obvious about not liking Rose. This difficult situation eventually led her to not completing high school.

What makes Rose's story ironic is that for the past 22 years she has worked as a seamstress at the Ebensburg Center, a state-funded institution for the mentally retarded. Prior to the job at the center, Rose worked for 15 years in a sewing factory. Her profession for the past 37 years was as a seamstress--the same profession of the teacher who did not encourage her and take the time to see her abilities.

A few years ago, Rose began to consider the idea of earning her GED diploma and enrolled in an adult-education program located at her work place. After brushing up her skills, she took



the GED tests but just missed passing by a few points.

Being a little disappointed, Rose took a few years off from pursuing her goal to get her GED diploma. However, one day she noticed a flyer on a bulletin board at work that caught her eye. Rose carried the flyer around for awhile. Then she called the instructional staff at Appalachian Youth Services (AYS) in Ebensburg, Pennsylvania. The staff set up an interview to get to know Rose and to decide what subjects needed to be studied. She concentrated on three of the five different GED tests: Math, Literature, and Science and was scheduled for classes, four days a week, at one and one half hours per day.

Rose worked hard during the time she was with the staff at AYS. In fact, she even made a customized bookbag to hold her GED materials.

Rose was getting excited about earning her GED diploma, but she had one pet peeve--math. She hated percentages. However, she reminded herself of her goal, worked hard, and began to get comfortable with the math assignments--even the percentages.

Finally, she was ready to take the three tests she needed to graduate. This time Rose felt a little more confident about taking these tests. One reason was because of the number of tests she was taking (three instead of five), and the other reason was because the actual seating arrangements were designed for adults. The first time Rose took the GED test, the testing center only had tables and chairs from an elementary school. Taking a five-hour test is difficult enough without having to worry about something as simple as comfort.

With the excitement building, Rose was not only nervous about passing the tests but was also worried about getting to the testing center. She had never driven to the city of Altoona before and was worried about getting lost.

Well, the day arrived. Rose made it to the testing center, but it wasn't all smooth sailing.

*Continued on Page 8*

## passage

*"Your Workplace and Job Skills Information Newsletter"*

**Editors:** Bernadette Mangie, Director, Education and Support Programs; John S. Goberish, Communications

**BCALMC Consultants:** Richard Carland, Workforce Education Specialist; Alex Garcia, Executive Director; Alice Green, Technical Advisor; and Greg Hill, EAPC Coordinator.

For more information, call 1-800-345-5443 or write to: PASSAGE Newsletter, BCALMC, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, PA 15027.

Rose had to deal with a few embarrassing situations that made the day a challenge. First, she tripped in front of the whole class while going up to get her second test. Then, as soon as she settled from this incident, a maintenance man came into the classroom and asked if anyone was from Southfork. Rose said "Yes," and he informed her that she had parked in the wrong area and had to move her car. Once again, she had to get up in front of the class in the middle of the test. Lastly, after finishing her test, she had to follow several detours on the way home and got lost. Needless to say, this wasn't her best day.

A few days later, Rose visited the AYS office and was not convinced that she had passed. However, the staff had full confidence in her abilities. So, with the tension mounting, the decision was made to call for her test results. To Rose's delight, she had passed her tests to earn the GED diploma. Actually, she had earned 15 additional points over the total number needed to pass.

Rose had a grin on her face that no one will ever forget. She was so proud of her accomplishment. She had reached her goal and experienced great self satisfaction. Since then, Rose has received the confirmation of her scores along with her Diploma. The smile is still on her face--a smile which says that all her hard work was worthwhile. Rose comments that the flyer she took down that day to call the center about adult education classes is back on the bulletin board. She put it back up so that someone else can benefit from the GED program and accomplish a lifelong goal.

### Programs Offered by AYS, Inc.

Appalachian Youth Service, Inc. (AYS) is a community-based, private, nonprofit, human service agency incorporated in 1977. The agency is licensed by the PA Department of Public Welfare as a Voluntary Child Care Agency. Over the past 15 years, AYS has successfully operated a variety of CETA and JTPA and other state-funded work training programs for youth and adults.

Program types have included Youth Limited Work Experience (LWE), Adult and Older Worker Limited Work Experience Programming, special LWE programs for Transitionally Needy Welfare Recipients, SPOC Employability Assessment, SPOC Basic Education, SPOC Job Readiness/Job Search, SPOC Limited Work Experience, SPOC Pregnant and Parenting Adult and Youth, Occupational Classroom Training, Education for Employment, Summer Youth Employment Training, Adult Literacy/GED Preparation, Dropout Prevention, and Title III Dislocated Worker Training.

For more information about AYS, call (814) 472-7874. □

### Ingredients for Success

"I've watched many people in various lines of endeavor striving to attain the best, and I have tried to determine what qualities they had in common.

Whether they were baseball pitchers trying for a no-hit game, sprinters attempting to break a world record, or grape growers intent on producing the finest wine in the world, they all had complete dedication to their goals. They displayed greater knowledge than their competitors; they were willing to put in the extra effort necessary to approach perfection; and they never settled for second best. They exerted themselves to reach these heights of accomplishment for both financial reward and the esteem of their peers or clients, and for their own satisfaction."

Stanley Marcus

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Q u e s t i o n s

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*The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.*

## What is Employability Security?

At one time, an employee's main concern was obtaining "job security" at his/her place of work (the idea of an employer providing an employee with the opportunity/security to work at the same company until retiring--a myth).

Next, in the 1980s, the term "employment security" began to replace the concept of job security. It reflected a new philosophy (belief/guideline) that employees should follow in a workplace that had changed dramatically. To obtain employment security, employees need to focus on adapting/upgrading skills and assuming new workplace responsibilities--a willingness to change and grow with the specific needs of the employer and the job market.

Today, "employability security" has become the term that best describes the challenges present in the workworld and the action steps employees must take to survive in the job market.



Employability security takes the concept of employment security one step further and provides the most realistic philosophy for surviving in a new and unpredictable labor market. It is the knowledge that one has the competencies (skills, education, and experience) demanded in the new economy and the ability to expand and adjust those competencies as (job or career) requirements change. [Kantner, R. "Globalism/Localism." Harvard Business Review 69, no. 2 (March-April 1991): 9-10.]

*Basically, today's and tomorrow's employees must establish a new way of thinking. In order to remain successful, employees must be aware of the following trends:*

- Employees can no longer expect to stay with the same employer for their entire work life. On an average, any individual in his/her twenties should be prepared to have up to ten different jobs in his/her lifetime.

*Continued on page 2*

# Resume Writing: Take A Second Look.



Perhaps you have been conducting a job search for the last six months or are working but have a resume on file "just in case." If this is your situation, when was the last time you looked at your resume?

*Take another look at your current resume and ask yourself the following questions:*

- > **How does it read?** Does it take a long time to read? Do your skills and abilities attract the reader's attention? (Remember, employers are busy people. Make sure they can get a solid idea of your background/experience in less than a minute.)
- > **Have you acquired any new skills or educational experience that should be added to my resume?** Did you obtain any volunteer work experience which is job-related? (Remember, volunteer work can be an impressive and effective addition to your resume.) Always keep current, up-to-date information.
- > **Are there any spelling or grammatical errors?** You would be surprised at the errors that often get overlooked when you are preparing a resume. The advantage of reviewing it later is that you are not in the same pressure situation of having to write/edit the resume. Also, you can be better focused and can look at it with a new perspective.
- > **How are employers responding to your resume?** Maybe you need to experiment with different approaches such as the format (chronological or functional) or paper choice. Be persistent and be prepared to change your approach. □

## *"What is Employability Security?" Continued from Page One*

- **An individual's** continued success depends greatly on his/her ability to keep up-to-date with the changing technologies, requirements of employers, and the needs of customers. (You should never become entirely comfortable with your current achievements and educational background. Always strive to learn more and expand your abilities. Quite often the ones who stand still are more likely to be affected by downsizing and overlooked for raises or promotions.)
- **Employees** have to be responsible for their own career development. Expect change; attend colleges, training schools, or seminars; have a plan if you happen to lose your job; and make sure you always have an updated copy of your resume. Never expect an employer to establish your career track for you. The employer needs to see you take advantage of opportunities and prove your importance to the success of the company.
- **Many jobs** may require relocation. An employee should be prepared to move to where his/her skills and experience are needed. Fulfilling one's dreams and career goals often requires making difficult decisions such as relocation. □

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## passage

*"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"*

**Editors:** Bernadette Mangie, Director, Education and Support Programs; John S. Goberish, Communications

**BCALMC Consultants:** Richard Carland, Workforce Education Specialist; Alex Garcia, Executive Director; Alice Green, Technical Advisor; and Greg Hill, EAPC Coordinator.

For more information, call 1-800-345-5443 or write to: **PASSAGE** Newsletter, BCALMC, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, PA 15027.

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# Cost Saving Tips For Attending College

Currently, the cost of attending college on a full-time basis ranges between \$5,000 to \$25,000 a year (depending on the college). If you are planning to attend college in the future, the following article offers suggestions that can help you save money and graduate on schedule.

## Credits

Students should be aware of the number of credits they will need to graduate on time. This is important for staying on schedule and getting the most for your money.

If you need 16 credits each semester to graduate in four years, try taking 17 or 18 credits (only if you are comfortable with the work load). If for some reason you have to drop a class or change your major, this will provide you with the extra credits you may need to stay on schedule.

Find out the total number of credits you can take a semester, as a full-time student, before you are charged additional money. Remember, if you pay the same amount of money for 13 or 14 credits as you would for 17 or 18 credits, why not take advantage of this opportunity to get the most for your money and to stay on track for your graduation.

*The bottom line:* If you take only 15 credits a semester and drop several classes, you will have to attend college an additional year to graduate. This will not only delay your ability to enter the work force but will also cost additional money that was not



necessary. (Also, by dropping below a certain number of credits, students can possibly lose their grants and/or scholarships.)

College is a big step and can be very rewarding. Don't overload yourself during your first semester. Learn to be comfortable with yourself, your new routine, and your study skills. Then you can increase your credits. (Be careful not to take too many difficult courses during the same semester.)

## Expenses

To obtain an accurate picture of the total cost for attending college each year, you need to list your individual expenses.

*Expenses you need to be aware of include:*

- **Tuition** - Cost of the courses/credits/instruction.
- **Living Expenses** - This includes room/board, food, and clothing. Will you be living on or off campus (dormitory or apartment)? What are the expenses for each?
- **Books and Supplies** - Talk to school advisors and students to get an average cost for books and supplies each semester. Used books, in most cases, are your best buy.

- **Transportation** - Will you be using your own vehicle or the bus? What are the gasoline and maintenance costs for your vehicle?
- **Miscellaneous Expenses** - In most cases, try shopping at stores that are outside of the campus area. Stores located on campus tend to have higher prices. Also, if you are on a limited budget, using credit cards may not be the best idea for a college student.

*\* Check upcoming issues of PASSAGE for information on how to apply for grants, loans, and scholarships which can help ease or relieve the cost of receiving a college education or vocational training.*

## Working Budget

Once you figure out your total expenses and your yearly income (this can include money from a job, loans, grants, and savings--it is the money you have available to spend), you are ready to establish your working budget.

*To establish a working budget you should:*

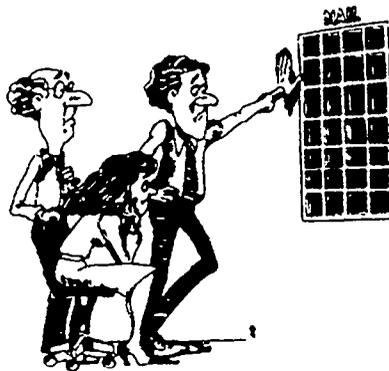
- List money that you have available for each semester.
- List your total expenses and subtract them from your total earnings.
- Decide what expenses are most important and necessary and what expenses can be eliminated.
- Stick to your plan! (If your budget is not working, analyze it and make the necessary adjustments.) A good working budget will serve you well. □

# Coping With Unemployment: Advice For Today's Job Seeker

The chances are great that every working individual in today's labor market will have to cope with unexpectedly losing a job at least once in his/her lifetime. An individual in the workplace of the future should be aware of how the present economic conditions, technology, and the changing needs of employers/customers affect employment stability. Whether you are currently working or are conducting a job search, this article will offer some useful tips that will help you stay on the right track in a changing work environment.

If you have lost your job, get job-search assistance. Most job seekers are understandably depressed about their employment situation. This is a normal and understandable reaction. However, many unemployed individuals make the mistake of trying to hide the fact that they are looking for employment. Perhaps this situation is caused by embarrassment, disappointment, and anger, but the job seeker has to get past these feelings.

Are you familiar with the story of the unemployed individual who didn't let anyone know that he lost his job—not even his family? He would leave his house every morning (pretending to go to work) and would drive around making very unorganized/ineffective efforts to find employment. The only thing this individual really accomplished was avoiding the



issue and becoming overwhelmed by his difficult situation.

His mistake, and the mistake of many job seekers, was not facing the problem and getting the appropriate assistance.

Don't let pride or worry get in the way. Conducting a job search is a great challenge even when you have help. Don't attempt to do everything by yourself.

*So, where do you start? Here are some tips that will help you attack the problem and greatly improve your chances for finding employment:*

- **Get the word out.** Make everyone you know aware of the fact that you are currently looking for employment and that you would greatly appreciate their assistance in finding suitable job leads. (This approach is called networking.) Also, keep in touch with these individuals on a regular basis. Remember, there is no reason to be embarrassed. People will understand your situation and will do their best to help you.

- **Contact organizations that can help you with your job search.** Each county has local Job Centers, Job Training Partnership Act Programs (JTPA), and Office of Vocational Rehabilitation (for individuals with disabilities) that can help you with various aspects of conducting a job search.

In your Yellow Pages, locate listings such as career and vocational counseling, employment training services, employment agencies, resume services, and employment contractors—temporary help that provides employment-related assistance. In addition, talk to instructors and counselors from your local adult-education program and local church organizations about job-search assistance and support programs that are available.

Some of the above services will be free and some will have fees attached. Do your research and decide what you can afford and what options are best for your situation.

**Bottom line:** Take advantage of as many services/job sources as possible (networking, employment assistance, career counseling, job clubs, job fairs, volunteer work, temporary services, employment agencies, and classified advertisements)!

Continued on page 5

# PCID: Preparing Adults For Success In The Workplace

Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh is one of over 200 Goodwill agencies located throughout the world which provides rehabilitation services, vocational training, and job placement to people who have disabilities or are unemployed or underemployed. Goodwill offers vocational rehabilitation and related services, with an emphasis on providing hands-on work experience. The programs fall into five distinct areas which include: Work Evaluation and Assessment; Training, Education, and Employment; Donated Goods Retail Program; Social Services and Residences; and Volunteers.

Recently, the PASSAGE editors had the opportunity to visit Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh and meet with the individuals who staff the Program for Career Information and Development (PCID). PCID, which is made possible by the Pittsburgh Partnership and Goodwill Industries, helps make unemployed and underemployed individuals aware of the changing economy

and prepare them for competitive careers in the new global work force.

Working in conjunction with Pittsburgh's Job Training Partnership Program, PCID utilizes a variety of methods and resources to educate job seekers, help these individuals set/meet realistic training/employment goals, and improve their chances for success in the workplace. The ingredients for their success include providing unemployed/underemployed individuals with career counseling/assessment, career information, career development, job preparation, and study skills.

*Here is a closer look at the comprehensive services that are provided to each participant:*

## **Career Counseling and Assessment**

The staff and counselors meet with individuals in group and one-to-one settings to assess each person's educational and employment backgrounds,

talents, interests, and abilities. Based on the results of the assessment and current labor-market information, the counselors work with each person to develop an Individual Service Strategy that will serve as a guide through the process of obtaining educational training, conducting a job search, and securing employment.

## **Career Information**

The program has a Career Resource Center that contains a large selection of up-to-date economic, labor, and occupational information which is used to help the job seeker with career decisions. Examples of resources available include information on supportive services; financial aid; career trends/occupational outlooks; study skills; and training opportunities (complete list of colleges/vocational schools in the area, the State Inventory Work Station, and various computer programs that provide information on careers

*Continued on page 8*

## *"Coping With Unemployment..." Continued From Page Four*

- **Be creative.** Your approach to conducting a job search will probably be different than conducting a job search 10 or 15 years ago. Ask yourself: "How can I better sell my abilities to the employer?"; "How can I improve my job-search materials?"; and "Why am I the best candidate for this position?"
- **Be good to yourself.** Don't question your abilities and self-worth if you do not get a job offer after an interview. It is not a personal insult. Chalk it up to experience, and know that you will be better prepared to sell your abilities during the next interview.
- **Don't wait** until you are nearing the end of unemployment benefits to start your job search. Start immediately; the risk is too great to lose valuable time. Even if you are employed at the present time, you should have your resume and a job-search plan of action prepared--just in case the worst happens. (In today's work environment, many of the most efficient and persistent job seekers can spend between six months to a year before they secure employment.) □

# STUDENT *accesspage*

## Focus: Test-Taking... Before, During, and After

This month's STUDENT *accesspage* serves as a continuation to October's exercise which focused on study skills. In this exercise, use the following suggestions to improve your test-taking skills, to become better organized, and to learn techniques that can help you relax during the day of a test.



essay questions. Choose questions that you believe may be included on the test. Even if you do not choose the exact questions that will appear on the test, this practice will help you with assembling essays in a logical manner.

Depending on your situation, many of these tips can be used for the GED tests, college courses, and vocational-training programs. Try each test-taking tip and see what works best for you.

### Before The Test (Study and Preparation)

- > **Review material** on a regular basis. After each class, review the material which was presented that day. Also, one week before the test, start reviewing all lessons, chapters, and notes that could be included on the test. Do not wait until the last minute to study six chapters.
- > **Make study cards.** Purchase some 5" X 7" note cards and write questions/definitions on one side and answers on the other side. This serves as an excellent study tool.
- > **Use a cassette tape recorder.** If you have a busy schedule, try tape recording class sessions or tape recording yourself reviewing your notes. Then you can play the recording in a portable cassette player with headphones or in your car's stereo system. Tape recording classes is also beneficial if you want to make certain that your hand-written notes are complete.
- > **Answer questions** that are included at the end of each chapter. These questions serve as an excellent review of the chapter and can help you as you prepare for the test.
- > **Review material with a classmate.** If you work in an organized manner, this approach can be an effective study method that can even be fun.
- > **Write.** If you know in advance that the test will include essay questions, prepare your own

- > **Take study breaks.** After a certain amount of time, give yourself a 15 to 20 minute break. The break will keep you from overloading yourself with information and will offer you a chance to get a fresh start. (Tip: Stay away from distractions such as the television.)
- > **Be familiar** with the location of the classroom or test-taking center. Know the best route to travel, the location of the building, and the appropriate place to park your car.
- > **Get a good night's sleep.** If you are prepared, seven or eight hours of sleep will help you become more relaxed and will clear your mind.

### The Day of the Test

- > **Arrive** at the test location 10 minutes early. Try not to rush; give yourself time to collect your thoughts and relax. If you have studied and are organized, you won't need to scan your notes in the remaining minutes before the test.
- > **Find out** if you are penalized for each question you do not answer (see if it is in your best interest to answer all questions) or if you are only graded on the number of questions you attempt and answer correctly. Some tests are scored differently than others.
- > **Make certain** that you write your name and any other necessary information (address, social security number, class, etc.) in the space provided on the test. If you are nervous, this is something that can easily be forgotten.
- > **Bring** the supplies needed to complete the test (pencils, pens, eraser, etc.)

*Continued on page 7*

# Workplace and Career-Related Topics

## Job-Search Assistance

- > The Office of Vocational Rehabilitation helped 5,500 Pennsylvania residents with disabilities find jobs in 1992. For more information about these services/locations, call (717) 787-2459.
- > There are presently 89 Job Centers in Pennsylvania. They are a one-stop shop for finding job-search assistance. In addition, the Job Centers have received "an innovations in government" award from Harvard and are considered a model for other states. For more information about these services and locations, call 1-800-622-JOBS.

## Where Do People Work?

- > 66% - Small Organizations (1 to 250 employees)
- > 18% - Medium Organizations (250 to 1,000 employees)
- > 16% - Large Organizations (Over 1,000 employees)

Source: U.S. Department of Labor

## Scheduling and Prioritizing

Andrew Carnegie, famous businessman and capitalist from the 1800s, once paid \$64,000 to a consultant who gave him two basic but important ideas:

- Write down what you must do today.
- Do the most important things first.

## Basic Skills in the Workplace

- > Nearly half of the nation's 191 million adults lack a basic proficiency with English and math skills. While the overall educational level of Americans has been on the rise, the demands in the workplace have increased at a faster rate.

U.S. Department of Education

## College Enrollments

- > The percentage of recent high school graduates who enrolled in colleges or universities in the fall of 1992 equaled the all-time high of 62 percent (set the previous year) up from 50 percent in 1980.

Source: Bureau of Labor □

## "STUDENTaccesspage" Continued from Page Six

- > Listen carefully to the instructions given before the test.
- > Be aware of the set time limits of each test and learn to pace yourself. Do not spend too much time on a difficult question.
- > Read each question carefully and thoroughly before answering.
- > Write information neatly on the test. You wouldn't want to lose test points because of sloppy handwriting.
- > Use the three-step method. First, complete only the questions that you believe you can answer correctly and mark the questions which need further thought. Second, go back and answer the questions that have a mark beside them. Third, review the test and make certain that your answers are complete.
- > Use the process of elimination if you are not sure of the correct answer. In the multiple choice section of a test, eliminate possible answers for each question that you know are not correct. Then make the best decision for each question based on the remaining choices. This is much more accurate than guessing.
- > Do not be afraid to ask a question during the test if there is something that seems unclear.
- > Do not worry about how fast or slow other people are finishing the test. Only worry about your performance and getting the test completed in an efficient manner.

## After The Test

- > Know that you did your best. Once the test is over, don't worry about it. Whatever happens, your effort and hard work will pay off in the long run.
- > Review the test after it has been scored. Know what areas need brush-up work and additional attention.
- > Try not to forget the test material—especially if the information covered relates to your chosen career field. Know that you are studying for more than just a test and know how this information will be beneficial. □

*"PCID: Preparing Adults for Success..." Continued from Page Five*  
and appropriate training programs). As part of its 12 member professional staff, PCID has an Occupational Resource Specialist who is responsible for locating useful/timely labor-market information and presenting it to PCID staff and program participants. In addition, the Occupational Resource Specialist is responsible for formulating employer surveys to determine necessary skills and job opportunities in areas where there is significant demand.

### **Career Development**

The PCID staff is committed to helping individuals progress through the many stages of researching careers, attending a school, and finding employment. With the family and personal commitments and the adjustments that go along with attending school, the program participants receive close assistance during this transition period and have access to a network of supportive services through case management (e.g., housing and child care).

### **Job Preparation**

Unemployed and underemployed individuals receive help with preparing resumes and cover letters and developing job-search strategies and interviewing skills. A variety of publications, computer software, and job listings are provided for participants. In addition, the staff has an established network of public and private employment agencies and educational institutions

who take a special interest in the program's participants.

### **Study Skills**

A comprehensive workshop entitled "Skills For Success" is provided for individuals who will be returning to school or entering a training program. The workshop is designed to reduce the anxiety and stress that is common during this transition. This component has dramatically reduced the participant drop-out rate.

### **Follow-Up Services**

To help ensure success in training and subsequent employment, the PCID staff members are in contact with program participants from the early stages of researching careers to six months after they find employment. Also, in a continuing effort to improve the quality of services for future participants, each individual is asked to evaluate the program by means of an exit survey.

### **For More Information**

If you are interested in learning more about PCID's services, please write to Goodwill Industries of Pittsburgh, Program for Career Information and Development, 2600 East Carson Street, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania 15203. □

*PASSAGE would like to thank William J. Freed, M.A., Occupational Resource Specialist and Eric Yenerall, M. Ed., M.A., JTPA O & A Supervisor for their assistance.*

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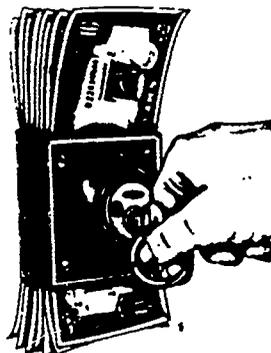
## In This Issue...

- > Exploring Financial Aid Opportunities for School (Pages 2 and 3)
  - Where to Start
  - Eligibility
  - Types of Assistance
  - Completing the Application
- > *Studentaccesspage*  
Focus: Resume Writing--Using Action Words (Pages 4 and 5)
- > Job Outlook for the 21st Century (Page 5)
- > The Changing Workplace: New and Emerging Occupations (Pages 6 and 7)
- > What Type of References Are You Receiving? (Page 8)
- > Read Your Employee Handbook. (Page 8)

*The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.*

## Education is the Key.

- > Jobs that are more demanding will continue to emerge in the U.S. economy. More than half of all new jobs created by the year 2005 will require some formal training beyond high school. Almost a third of all new jobs will be filled by college graduates compared to only 22 percent today. Youths who drop out of school or complete high school without obtaining basic reading and math skills will be at a great disadvantage in the workplace of 2005.



Source: U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

- > The level of education plays a role in determining how high or low your lifetime earnings will be. For example, the difference between the career or lifetime earnings of a high school graduate and those of a college graduate is \$350,190 even after subtracting the cost of a college education and lost wages over four years.
- > There is also a dramatic comparison between those who have less than four years of high school education and those who have graduated

from high school. High school graduates make an average of \$133,560 more in their working lives than those who haven't graduated from high school. For many high school

dropouts, the lost earnings are far greater because they often face long periods of unemployment.

Source: Pennsylvania Career Guide, 1993 Edition

- > The U.S. Department of Labor estimates that half of all existing jobs will be eliminated in the next 20 years. These jobs will be replaced by new jobs that require individuals who are educated (high school, GED, college/vocational school) to learn new skills and to constantly adapt to the changing work environment.
  - > Workers who need and receive training to get their jobs earn more annually than those who reported not needing training, according to a recent study based on Census Bureau surveys.
- > Source: Washington Post □

# Exploring Financial Aid Opportunities for School

This article serves as a detailed continuation of information presented in the recent PASSAGE articles "STUDENTaccesspage Focus: Choosing a School" (September 1993) and "Cost Saving Tips For Attending College" (November 1993). If you need to obtain financial aid for

college/vocational training, this article will help you explore options for finding assistance and will help you with completing applications/ understanding requirements for obtaining federal financial aid.

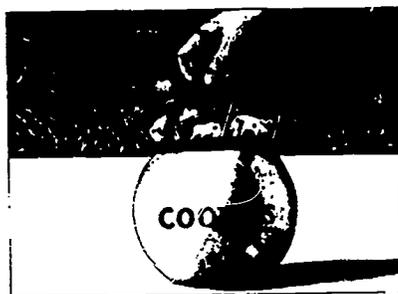
## Where Do You Start?

- > Go to your public library and ask for help in finding sources of financial aid for school.
- > Check sources in your community or nearby areas. For example, your employer/your parents' employers, local unions, foundations, religious groups, civic organizations, or clubs may have funding or scholarships available.
- > See if you are eligible for special assistance. For example, veterans should call their local Veterans Affairs' office to see if they are eligible for educational benefits/assistance or individuals who have a disability should call their local Office of Vocation Rehabilitation for assistance.
- > Meet with representatives from the financial aid office of the school you are interested in attending. Request information about scholarship programs, school-aid programs, work-study programs, and State/Federal grant programs. The school financial aid representative can also help you with applying for assistance. When applying for federal student aid, you can obtain an application form from your school.

## Eligibility Requirements for Federal Student Aid

To receive financial aid from federal student aid programs, you must:

- > Show a financial need.
- > Have a high school diploma, a GED, or pass a special test given by your school (this test is approved by the U.S. Department of Education).



- > Be a citizen of the United States or an eligible non-citizen.
- > Be working towards obtaining a degree or certificate (in most cases).
- > Show satisfactory academic progress (grade average/ number of courses).

## What Types of Federal Student Aid Are Available?

The three types of federal student aid available include Grants, Work-Study Programs, and Loans. (Contact your school's financial aid representative to see which Federal programs the school uses. More than 8,600 schools nationwide participate in one or more Federal Student Financial Aid Programs.)

1. **Grants** are money awards that do not have to be repaid by the recipient (the student). Two examples of grants offered are:

- Pell Grants - assistance for undergraduate students attending school at least half time.
- Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grants (SEOG) - assistance for undergraduates with exceptional financial need.

During the 1989/1990 school year, the federal government awarded over \$4.5 billion in grants.

2. **Work-Study** programs provide students with the opportunity to work at their school and earn money to help pay for their educational expenses.

3. **Loans** are financial assistance that have to be repaid, at a later date, with interest. Various loan programs include:

- Perkins Loan - Low-interest loans which are provided by the students' educational institution. Students in vocational programs and students in undergraduate and graduate programs are eligible for this loan.
- Stafford Loans - These are loans made by banks, credit unions, and savings and loan associations. To be eligible, students should attend school at least half time. These loans are to be repaid when the student graduates or leaves school (usually six months upon completion of attending school). *Continued on page 3*

Continued from page 2

- Supplemental Loans for Students (SLS) and PLUS Loans - The SLS is for independent student borrowers (individuals who report their own income), and the PLUS is for parents who want to help pay for their children's education. These loans are made by commercial lenders. Individuals who use these loans usually must begin repaying the loan within 60 days after receiving the last loan payment.

### Information You Will Need to Complete an Application for Federal Student Aid

Records needed for yourself and your family include:

- Recent U.S. income tax return (IRS Form 1040m, 1040A, or 1040EZ)
- Recent State and local income tax returns.
- W-2 Forms and other records of money earned during the past year.
- Records of untaxed income, such as welfare, social security, AFDC or ADC, or veterans benefits.
- Current bank statements.
- Current mortgage information.
- Business and farm records.
- Records of stocks, bonds, and other investments.
- Driver's license and social-security card.

### Sections included on the Application for Federal Student Aid include:

*Section A:* Yourself (Name, address, marital status, social security number, date of birth, etc.)

*Section B:* Student Status (Questions about dependents, Armed Forces, parents, marital status)

*Section C:* Household Information (Additional questions are asked about family members and number of college students in your family)

*Section D:* Income, Earnings, and Benefits

*Section E:* Federal Stafford Loan Information (Questions about previous Stafford Loans you may have secured.)

*Section F:* Your Veterans Education Benefits Per Month

*Section G:* College Release and Certification (Requires you to list the college(s) you wish to

attend and asks for permission to release this information to financial aid agencies in your State and colleges you are interested in attending.)

*Section H:* Asset Information (Questions about cash, savings, investments, etc.)

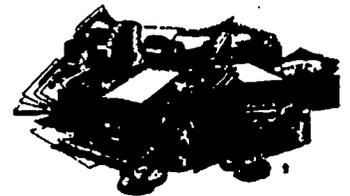
*Section I:* State Information (This section is to be filled out if you are also applying for State financial aid. It includes questions about educational status, full-time/part-time status, course of study, predicted graduation date, housing arrangements for college, and child-care expenses.)

### Before You Mail Your Application...

- Make certain that the financial information on your Application for Federal Student Aid matches the financial information on your records and tax returns. Errors in this information could cause delays in determining your eligibility for aid.
- Print carefully (make sure it is easy to read) and use dark ink.
- Be sure to include your social security number. Applications without this number will be returned.
- Give yourself enough time to properly complete the form (one or two hours). In this time, you will need to review the instructions, collect the needed information, complete the form, and review the information to ensure accuracy.
- Be certain that your financial aid application is submitted on time and as early as possible (check the deadline on the form). The deadlines are strict; don't miss an opportunity to receive assistance. Many sources of financial aid are "first come, first served."

For more information about Federal student aid programs, write for a free copy of: The Student Guide, Box 84, Washington, DC 20044, or if you have additional questions, call 1 (800) 433-3243.

Adapted from "School Shopping Tips," Office of Student Financial Assistance, U.S. Department of Education and from the "Free Application for Federal Student Aid," U.S. Department of Education, Student Financial Assistance Programs. □

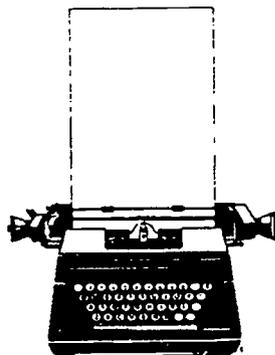


# STUDENTaccesspage

## Focus: Resume Writing--Using Action Words

### Introduction

Do you think your resume would impress a potential employer? Would your resume stand out among dozens of other resumes? Is your resume clearly written and focused? Are your sentences and examples well organized? Are you successfully selling your abilities to the employer?



These power words will help bring the examples of your abilities to life.

### Sample Resumes: Before and After

In this practice exercise, the following individual wants to obtain a position as a secretary and has some education and experience in the field. In the first version of the resume, the job seeker writes

Whether you currently have a resume or are about to begin working on one, you need to ask yourself these important questions. While there are many factors that contribute to a great resume (style, layout/design, paper choice, etc.), let us take a look at how action words (power words) can improve the content of your resume and can help you get your message across to a potential employer.

the bare minimum and does not use many examples or action words. The second version of the resume uses many action words and well-constructed sentences with examples.

### Getting Started

The action words you choose when writing your resume should relate to your skills, abilities, experience, and work ethic. For example, if you are seeking a position as a bank teller, action words which may be appropriate for your career field could include: calculated, computed, maintained, prepared, balanced, controlled, and recorded. Not only do these words "spice-up" your resume, they show job responsibility and knowledge.

#### Version #1 (Before)

#### Work Experience

Hill Associates, Mangieville, Pennsylvania  
(1989-1992)

#### Secretary

- Was responsible for handling office duties which included typing, answering telephone calls, filing, and greeting visitors.

#### Educational Experience

The Carland Computer Training Center, Garcia, Pennsylvania (1989)

#### Certificate

- Completed a twelve-week course on basic-computer operations, word processing, and data-base operations and received a certificate of completion.

(Continued on page 5)

In every career field, there are certain words and phrases that can improve your chances of getting the employer's attention. Action words should be used in the sections of your resume that highlight your employment and educational background.

### Some Examples Of Action Words Include:

accomplished	conducted	examined	maintained	produced	scheduled
achieved	constructed	expanded	managed	programed	secured
adapted	contributed	focused	monitored	projected	solved
administered	controlled	formulated	motivated	promoted	supervised
analyzed	coordinated	generated	operated	provided	taught
approved	created	guided	organized	recorded	trained
assembled	decreased	improved	oversaw	recruited	upgraded
assisted	designed	increased	participated	reduced	worked
balanced	directed	informed	performed	repaired	wrote
budgeted	developed	initiated	planned	reported	
communicated	diversified	inspected	prepared	researched	
completed	established	installed	presented	retrieved	
computed	evaluated	instructed	prioritized	saved	

\* Place a mark beside any words which you feel could be used in your resume and relate to your field of interest.

# Job Outlook for the 21st Century

- Jobs created between now and the year 2000 will be different from those today and will require higher-skill levels.
- The fastest-growing occupations will require much higher math, language, and reasoning abilities than current jobs.
- Many jobs with lower-skill levels will disappear.
- Today, inexpensive office and home computers are more powerful than the machines used to guide the Apollo rocket that carried man to the moon in 1969.
- Computers that think like people will become commonplace by 2000.
- Digital telecommunications will make home shopping, banking, working from home, and even dial-up music or video entertainment possible.
- Silicon secretaries (computers) that can take dictation and edit letters, reservation clerks that understand speech in any language, or robots that can load a truck or pick strawberries will be coming into wide use by the year 2000. □

Source: *Workforce 2000*, Hudson Institute

## STUDENT access page continued from page 4

### Version #2 (After)

#### Work Experience

Hill Associates, Mangieville, Pennsylvania (1989-1992)

#### Secretary

- Completed the typing for six people who included the President, Vice President, Treasurer, Sales Coordinator, and District Manager.
- Utilized WordPerfect 6.0 for preparing all documents and communications.
- Answered, directed, and screened all incoming telephone calls and made certain that complete/accurate messages were recorded.
- Organized/filed company documents which included contracts, reports, proposals, memos, and correspondence.
- Welcomed visitors, confirmed meeting times, and ensured that the public image/philosophy of the organization was upheld.

#### Educational Experience

The Carland Computer Training Center, Garcia, Pennsylvania (1989)

#### Certificate

- Graduated from a twelve-week computer training course and received certificate.
- Mastered the basic operations of a computer (keyboard, mouse, Windows 2.0, and DOS).
- Received hands-on experience with preparing documents, mail merges, and mail labels on the following word-processing packages: WordPerfect 5.1, Microsoft Word, MultiMate, and WordStar.
- Obtained training in the use of database software (dBASE IV and Microsoft) in the modern-work environment.

The first version did not create very much excitement or sell the job seeker's abilities. The second version used more action words and gave detailed examples. Also, the sentences in the second version were kept short and to the point.

#### Conclusion

Use the following checklist when preparing sentences/examples for your resume:

- Select action words that relate to your career field and that best sell your abilities.
- Begin each example, which highlights skills/abilities, with an action verb.
- Try to use a variety of action verbs that are appropriate to your career field. Do not use the same action verbs to begin each sentence.
- Provide at least three examples of accomplishments or skills for each employer and educational institution/ training center listed on your resume.
- Try to keep sentences under 25 words.
- Have a friend, instructor, or former coworker read your resume. Ask for their first impressions. (Remember, an employer's first impression of your resume has to be positive.) □

# The Changing Workplace: New and Emerging Occupations

Today's and tomorrow's job markets present many challenges. Every year, established occupations continue to change job descriptions and to adapt to technological growth; and at the same time, new jobs and careers are also being created on a regular basis. To highlight these changes, this issue of *PASSAGE* takes a brief look at thirteen new and emerging occupations.

Use this article as an introduction to new job possibilities and as a quick glimpse at technology and the changing job market. The job outlook predictions and wage estimates for these positions are not available at this time because these occupations are relatively new to the job market.

*If a particular occupation is of interest to you, please make the effort to conduct more research with employers, individuals in the career field, and educational institutions.*

**Robot Technician** - Installs, programs, and repairs robots and related equipment, such as programmable controllers, robot controllers, end-of-arm tools, conveyors, and parts orienters. Applies knowledge of electronics, electrical circuits, mechanics, pneumatics, hydraulics, and programming, using power tools, handtools, and testing instruments and following manuals, schematic diagrams, and blueprints. Programs the robot to perform specified tasks, applying knowledge of programming language.



**Satellite-Instruction Facilitator** - Monitors training programs transmitted by communication satellites from colleges and universities to remote educational institutions. Registers students for satellite communication courses and sells/distributes textbooks and other classroom materials. Activates audiovisual receiver and monitors classroom viewing of live or recorded courses transmitted by communication satellite. Monitors live seminar transmissions and stimulates classroom discussion after broadcast.

**Laserist** - Creates optical designs-and-effects show for entertainment of audiences, using control console and related laser projection and recording equipment. Sets up and operates console to control laser projection, recording equipment, and house lights. Moves controls to orchestrate colors, patterns, and movements in concert with musical accompaniment.

**Perfusionist** - Sets up and operates a heart-lung machine, in a hospital, which is designed to take over functions of patient's heart and lungs during surgery or respiratory failure. Operates heart-lung machine to

regulate blood circulation/ composition and oxygen and carbon dioxide levels, to administer drugs, and to control body temperature during surgery.

**Human Resource Advisor** - Provides company personnel assistance in identifying, evaluating, and resolving human relations and work performance problems within a company to improve communication skills and work performance. Develops and conducts training programs to instruct management and workers in human-relation skills and effective group-interaction skills. May participate in resolving labor-relations' issues.

**Nuclear-Criticality Safety Engineer** - Conducts research and evaluates methods of transportation, handling, and storage of nuclear fuel to prevent accidental nuclear reaction at nuclear facilities. Studies reports of nuclear fuel characteristics to determine potential hazards. Uses knowledge of nuclear physics to help determine potential accident conditions which may exist in fuel handling/storage and recommends preventive measures.

**Horticultural Therapist** - Plans, coordinates, and conducts therapeutic-gardening programs which contribute to the rehabilitation of physically- and mentally-handicapped patients. Evaluates patients' disabilities to determine gardening programs. Conducts gardening sessions to

*Continued on page 7*

*Continued from page 6*

rehabilitate, train, and provide recreation for patients.

**Teacher of Deaf Students -**

Teaches elementary and secondary school subjects to aurally-handicapped students (individuals with hearing disabilities), using various methods, such as lip reading, finger spelling, cued speech, and sign language. Instructs deaf and hard-of-hearing students in communication skills, using hearing aid or other electronic or electrical amplifying equipment. Plans curriculum utilizing visual media, such as films, television, and charts.

**Environmental Epidemiologist**

- Studies the incidence (rate of occurrence) of disease in industrial buildings and work areas and the effects of industrial chemicals on health. Conducts epidemiological studies (epidemiology is a science dealing with the incidence and control of disease). Compares statistics on causes of illness and death among members of selected working populations with those among general populations, using life-table analyses to determine probable effects of work settings and activities on disease and mortality rates and using valid statistical techniques and knowledge of epidemiology. Presents findings of studies and recommends methods to address environmental problems in the workplace.

**Radiopharmacist -** Prepares and dispenses radioactive pharmaceuticals (medical products) used for patient

diagnosis and therapy, applying principles and practices of pharmacy (art and science of preparing/dispensing drugs) and radiochemistry. Calculates volume of radioactive pharmaceutical required to provide patient with desired level of radioactivity at prescribed time, according to established rates of radioisotope decay. Analyzes prepared radiopharmaceutical, using measuring and analysis instruments and equipment, such as ionization chamber, pulse-height analyzer, and radioisotope dose calibrator, to verify rate of drug disintegration and to ensure that the patient receives required dose.

**Home-Health Technician -**

Provides patient-care assistance in house-hold management to patients and families in the home. Assists ambulatory and bedridden patient with dressing, bathing, grooming, and various personal-hygiene needs. Performs procedures and treatments as directed by professional staff, such as massages, hot and cold applications, dressing changes, wound irrigation, enemas, and ostomy care. Under medical supervision, administers oral medications and injections. Measures and records patient's temperature, pulse, respiration rate, blood pressure, and fluid intake and output. Teaches patients and their family members approved medical techniques to enable continuing home care.

**Hazardous-Waste Management Specialist -** Conducts studies on hazardous-waste management projects and provides

information on treatment and containment of hazardous waste. Helps develop hazardous-waste rules and regulations to protect people and the environment. Surveys industries to determine type and magnitude of disposal problem and assists in developing plans for prevention of spills and other accidents. Provides technical assistance in the event of a hazardous chemical spill and identifies pollutant, determines hazardous impact, and recommends corrective action.

**Digitizer Operator -** Processes data for business or industry by using the latest technology. Operates electronic encoding machine to trace coordinates on documents, such as maps or drawings, and to encode document points into computer. Positions document on digitizer encoding machine table (reads/converts to digital information). Guides digitizer cursor over document to trace coordinates, stops at specified points, and punches cursor key to digitize points into computer memory unit. Types commands on keyboard to transfer encoded data from memory unit to magnetic tape. Keeps record of work orders, time, and tape operation. □

*Source: Pennsylvania Career Guide, 1993 Edition*



## What Type of References Are You Receiving?

Some job seekers are concerned that previous employers may be giving potential employers an unfavorable report on past job performance. If a former employer is providing a bad reference, be sure you:

- Inform your previous employer that his/her untrue remarks could be characterized as defamation. (to wrongfully attack one's good character). Your goal should be to stop the employer from giving any untrue information.
- Revise your reference list. Replace the individual who is providing a bad reference and add the name of another individual (manager or supervisor) who knows your abilities and can provide a good reference.
- Make certain that the people on your reference list have current information of your work/educational history and can convince a potential employer of your abilities. □

## Read Your Employee Handbook.

Many employee handbooks end up hidden in a drawer, locker, or trunk of a car. These handbooks are given to many new employees when they are hired. However, for some reason, most workers never get around to reading this listing of company practices and policies.

To get started on the right foot at a new job, take the time to read and understand your employee handbook. Make an effort from the beginning to be an informed and conscientious employee.

What information is provided in this document? An employee handbook is designed to:

- Serve as a starting point for employees who don't know where to turn when they have a problem.
- Explain vacation scheduling, list the holidays, describe expense-account procedures, highlight company safety procedures, summarize the employee-benefit programs, and explain pay procedures, among other information.
- Promote fair and consistent company policies.

However, keep in mind that the information in the handbook is not necessarily written in stone. For example, it does not prevent a company from terminating employees or from changing policies at any time. Also, handbooks are sometimes updated (every several years) to match changes in company procedures and to follow legislative and regulatory mandates. □

## passage

*"Your Workplace and Job-Skills  
Information Newsletter"*

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*The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.*

## Intensify Your Job Search

Why do job searches seem to take forever? This is a question that is often asked of Janna K. Becherer, head of Career Access, a career counseling organization.



Her first response to that question is, "There is a lot of competition out there, but, at the same time, the job seeker's own behavior also can be a factor...opening doors to personal success."

*There are three problem areas that Ms. Becherer believes can lengthen your job search:*

- **Lack of focus.** Although being flexible is good, don't come across as vague and unfocused. Telling prospective employers, "I'll take anything," may add months to your job search. Be clear about your goals.
- **Failure to market yourself.** You have to sell yourself (skills, education, and abilities) to get a job. To learn about job openings, actively network. Don't just passively read want ads, and have a carefully targeted resume, not a generic one. Also, prepare in advance and

thoroughly practice your interviewing skills.

- **Foot-in-mouth disease.** Don't say damaging things about

yourself or others during telephone or in-person interviews. This includes not complaining about a former boss, how unfairly you were treated in your last job, or how no one appreciated you and your efforts. No one wants to hire a dissatisfied person. □

Source: Knight-Ridder Newspapers

### Who's Attending College in PA?

In 1990, out of the 607,063 Pennsylvania women between the ages of 18 and 24, 37.3 percent were enrolled in college. Of the 604,706 men between 18 and 24, 34.7 percent were college students. Of the 3,654,205 Pennsylvania males age 25 and older, four percent were enrolled in college, compared to the 4.3 percent of the 4,218,727 females in this age group. □

PA State Data Center, PSDC News, Vol. 11, No. 3, Nov. 1993.

## Focus: Resume Writing--Preparing The Introduction

This month's STUDENTaccesspage is a continuation of PASSAGE's December 1993, issue which focused on using action words when preparing your resume. This article will serve as a guide for preparing the introductory paragraph (job objective or profile section) of your resume.



- State information that will be supported (examples) in the body of your resume (work experience and educational experience). The body of your resume will provide more detail and will reinforce statements made in the introduction.

Over the years, this introductory paragraph or section has been given many different titles such as job objective, interests, strengths, summary, background, profile, areas of skill and knowledge, brief, inventory, or various combinations of these terms. Regardless of the title given to this section, the introductory paragraph should always appear at the top of your resume after your name, address, and telephone number.

In addition to the variety of possible titles, the content of this introduction can vary depending on your situation and tastes. Remember, resume writing is a creative process that can be approached (content and design) in many different ways. The writer has a number of options when preparing the introduction. Whatever you decide to include in your introductory paragraph, make certain that it helps to answer the question of every employer, "What can this candidate do for our organization?"

*Even though you have a great deal of flexibility, the introductory section of your resume should:*

- Include one paragraph that is brief and to the point. Write only three or four short sentences.
- Be easy to read. In many ways, this can be designed to be the "hook" that catches the eye of the employer.
- Focus on your experience, training, skills, and abilities and how they will be beneficial to the employer. Think of what qualities and traits are important in your career field. (Make certain that your resume reflects this information.)
- Contain information that is factual. Don't waste everyone's time by including information that is not accurate.

When you are preparing the introduction, you need to decide if the information you include (employment goals) should be specific. If you decide to target one particular type of job, your introduction should be more detailed and specific. If you decide you want to be considered for a variety of related job openings, your introduction should briefly state your employment goals (general) without getting too specific.

Here are some examples of various styles of preparing your introduction. Some are more specific than others. See which style best relates to your situation...

### ✓ Example #1 - Salesperson (General)

#### Job Objective

To obtain a challenging position in Sales, providing an opportunity to apply current skills and interest in Sales, Promotions, Customer Service, and related positions.

### ✓ Example #2 - Administrative Assistant (Specific)

#### Profile

*Administrative Assistant (\*notice specific job title was included)*

- Career secretary with over 10 years of professional experience in office environments.
- Skilled in typing, filing, word processing, data entry, computer operations, invoicing, writing/editing, and bookkeeping.
- Completed various training programs to update skills and have strong organizational and interpersonal skills.

Continued on page 3

## STUDENT access page continued from page 2

### ✓ Example #3 - Electrician (Specific)

#### Summary

##### Master Electrician (Licensed)

- Extensive experience in all types of electrical work which includes residential, commercial, industrial, and electrical construction. Have five years of management experience, solid communication skills, good organizational skills, and willing to travel or relocate.

### ✓ Example #4 - Photographer (Specific)

#### Photographer

##### Strengths:

- Three years of experience working in the newspaper industry.
- Ability to work independently and meet multiple deadlines.
- Creative abilities, solid communication skills, and organizational skills.

### ✓ Example #5 - Computer Operator (General)

#### Career Objective

To obtain a position in the field of data processing which utilizes my educational and work-related experience.

### ✓ Example #6 - Office Work (General)

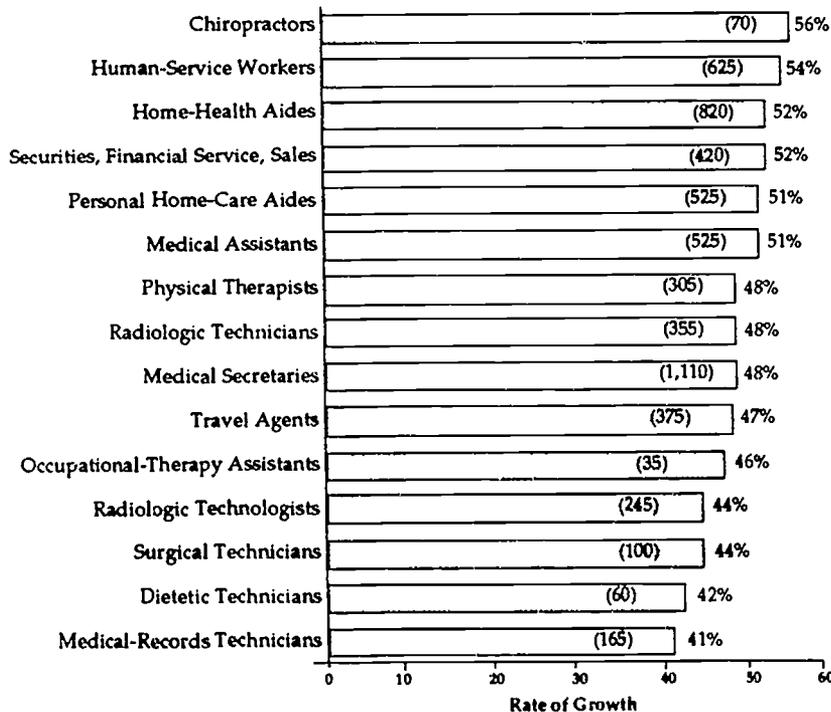
#### Objective: Clerical/Word Processing/Secretarial

- Knowledgeable of IBM and MAC systems.
- WordPerfect 6.0, dBASE IV, Wordstar, Quatro Pro, and Microsoft Works.
- Type 65 words per minute.
- Solid interpersonal skills, fast learner, and accurate.

\* There are many opinions as to how this section of the resume should be prepared. (In fact, some resumes skip this section entirely and go directly to the educational and work-related experience.) Take the time to experiment and examine your results. Get the advice of friends, family, job counselors, instructors, and individuals who have been in the position of hiring employees. Good luck! □

## Fastest Growing Occupations in Pennsylvania

Figures in parentheses are job openings per year.



Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, Bureau of Research and Statistics

## Employer Sponsored Training

The number of U.S. workers receiving formal training from their employers surged this year to a record 47 million. The 15 percent increase, up from 41 million last year, is the biggest yearly increase ever measured. □

Source: Training

## Job Outlook for Paralegals

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that the field will grow by 104 percent by 2000, adding 62,000 new jobs.

A paralegal, also known as a legal assistant and a lawyer's assistant, works as an aide to lawyers. □

## Flexibility in the Workplace

Today, there are about 1,300 on-site or near-site child-care centers sponsored or subsidized by American employers, according to studies by the Families and Work Institute. This number compares with 110 employers who offered any form of child-care assistance in 1978.

This increase may be one example of how many employers are considering flexible work schedules, job sharing, work-at-home options, and compressed work weeks as methods of assisting working parents. The employers who are offering these options to employees realize that it is important to keep skilled employees and that it is expensive to constantly replace employees (high turnover rates).

One thing is for certain--the workplace is changing, and this change requires both employers and employees to be creative and establish new methods of operation. □

## Humor in the Workplace

- > Humor is a great productivity booster in the workplace. Ninety-six percent of executives, when asked, said that workers with a sense of humor do better at their jobs than their more serious counterparts. Also, people who have recently watched a funny movie are more quick to find creative solutions to problems and are more flexible. □

Source: *Newsday*

## Always Follow Up.

After each interview you attend, make an effort to send a thank-you letter (one or two days after the interview) and to place a follow-up telephone call (one week after the interview) to restate your interest in the company and the position. It could be the difference between getting or not getting a job offer.

To give you a small sample of the importance of follow up, take a moment to learn from this real life example...

At Rockwell International, Greg Smith, regional manager for sales, had narrowed the field of candidates for one job opening to four individuals. All four individuals had impressed him during their interviews, and each person seemed well qualified. However, after the interview, Mr. Smith stated that, "Three of the candidates completed the appropriate follow up, both a phone call and a letter, and one person did nothing."

He eliminated this person from being considered because this was a sales position and because he wanted a salesperson with persistence.

**Bottom-Line:** A good follow up includes a letter and a telephone call. Learn to be persistent. (Avoid being overly aggressive and irritating when dealing with a potential job opportunity.) □

*Adapted from "Swing Job Search Toward You With Good Follow Up," Diana Kunde, Dallas Morning News*

## The Average Work Week

- > The Families and Work Institute in New York recently conducted a detailed survey of American workers. One of the areas researched in the survey included the average number of hours an individual works per week. The findings revealed that men work an average of 48.8 hours a week and women work an average of 41.7 hours a week. □

## Free Publication Available

The PA Department of Labor and Industry publishes a Progress Report which highlights how the Department helps State residents and business/ workers in the Commonwealth.

To receive a free copy, write to:  
*Progress Report, Room 1718, L & I Building, 7th and Forster Streets, Harrisburg, PA 17120.* □

## passage

*"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"*

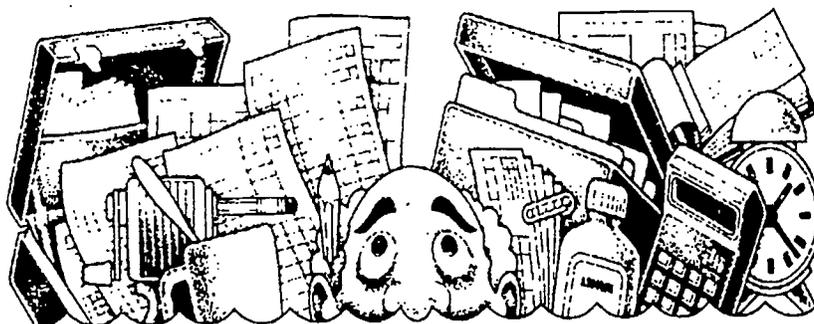
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# Enhancing Your Memory Skills

*"Very often our memories are like a bride's apparel—something old, something new, something borrowed, and from time to time, something blue."*



Developing solid memory skills can positively enhance many aspects of your life. Whether it is in the workplace, in school, or at home, improving your memory skills can be extremely beneficial.

Maybe there have been times when you were attending a job interview and had forgotten the name of the person you had just met ten minutes ago, or you were in the middle of a test and your mind went blank. Does this sound familiar? Most individuals have found themselves in similar situations on many occasions.

So, how can you improve your memory skills? The first step to take is to realize that everyone has the ability to drastically improve their memory skills. (Many people falsely believe one has to be born with this special talent.) All you have to do is make a conscious effort to improve this skill. Remember, good memory skills must be practiced; they don't just happen automatically.

*Let's look at what factors enhance or improve the storage and retrieval of information (remembering and accessing memories/data):*

**1. Motivation** - You have to be motivated to remember something. Understand the

importance of the information you are learning. If you don't see the value of remembering something, chances are this information will not be remembered. You will have an easier time remembering information if you have a motivation for remembering it (job-related, personal interest, financial savings, etc.).

**2. Practice** - Remembering information takes practice. Individuals who have a good memory work hard at improving this skill and have memory techniques that they utilize everyday. Try using games such as Scrabble, Trivial Pursuit, or crossword puzzles to help exercise your memory skills.

**3. Confidence** - Often self-doubt creates anxiety, and this anxiety can cause forgetfulness. Keep a positive attitude. There is a direct connection between a positive attitude about yourself and learning/remembering. Convince yourself that you are capable of improving this skill.

**4. Distractions** - Too many distractions can affect your memory. Few people can truly learn and remember with distractions occurring during these processes. Before you attempt to commit information

to memory, limit your distractions.

**5. Focusing** - Focusing helps you attend to details in the learning process. Recalling details will help you to remember

information. This process can involve writing information and discussing it with others; associating new information with old information; and forming mental pictures.

## Methods for Improving Your Memory

One of the main goals in improving your memory is to transfer information from your short-term memory (working memory—limited amount of storage space) to your long-term memory (recalling memory—permanent storage). Methods that can assist with this transfer to long-term memory include:

- > **Drill and Practice** - This involves repetition (rote maintenance rehearsals) which is very important to processing information from your short-term memory to your long-term memory. Everyone needs to conduct drills and practices when tackling new learning assignments or new groups of information. (What works best for you...quizzes, talking out loud, writing, etc?)

*Continued on page 6*



- **Relate to the Known** - This involves using detailed rehearsals that relate information you already know to the new information that you are trying to learn and remember. For example, the same organizational methods you use to prepare a written assignment (report, term paper, or essay) are the same methods you would use to prepare a speech. Both written assignments and speeches should include an introduction, body, and conclusion. If you have written paragraphs in the past and can transfer these skills, you are on your way to learning effective public-speaking skills. You use what you know from one

area, find similarities, and expand upon your knowledge.

- **Form Associations** - This involves utilizing tricks or learning tools. Perhaps you have used this method in the past. For example, imagine that you are taking a science course in college and need to remember the components of soil. Here is a humorous association for you to use--All Hairy Men Will Buy Razors. The first letter in each word represents a component in the soil.

All--Air  
Hairy--Humus  
Men--Mineral Salts  
Will--Water  
Buy--Bacteria  
Razors--Rock Particles

Use this information and the practice examples as a starting point for improving your memory skills. For more information on this subject, contact your local library, ADVANCE, or the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center. □

Source: *Source: Psychology, Fifth Edition, Spencer A. Rathus*

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**Proven Fact: Relearning is a measure of retention. Material is usually relearned more quickly than it is learned initially!**

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## More About Your Memory...

By understanding the actual process of storing and retrieving information, you can begin to improve upon your ability to commit information to memory.

### The Types of Memory

- > **Episodic Memory** - This involves remembering information by associating it with an episode (event or happening) in your life. Examples range from remembering what you ate for breakfast to where you were when you were in an automobile accident.
- > **Semantic Memory** - This is general knowledge that you remember from practicing. Examples include knowing who the first President of the United States was or knowing the birth date of our country.
- > **Procedural Memory** - This is specific knowledge about how to complete certain tasks. Procedural memory is also known as skill memory. Examples include remembering how to swim, ride a bike, or even type.

### Stages of Processing Information

- > **Encoding** - This process involves modifying (adapting information in a form that is easy for you to remember) information so that it can be placed in your memory. Senses such as visual images or sounds can register (store) information. For example, the sound of a crowd may remind some people of the first baseball game they attended and the many happenings that occurred that day.
- > **Storage** - This is the second process of memory and involves maintaining (remembering) information over a period of time. To store information, you need to rehearse or mentally repeat the information by "saying it over and over again in your mind."
- > **Retrieval** - This final stage involves locating information in your memory and transferring this information to your conscious mind. There are two basic types of retrieval: immediate retrieval (i.e., remembering your name) and complex retrieval (i.e., combination of the encoding and storage processes). □

# The 1994 PASSAGE Reader Survey



## Introduction

Each year the editors of PASSAGE prepare a reader survey. In the past, this survey has proved to be extremely beneficial to the newsletter's development.

This survey will help the PASSAGE staff understand what information and subject areas are beneficial to our readership, how your organization uses the newsletter, and how the newsletter can better suit your educational/career-related needs.

Please complete the following survey (deadline is March 1, 1994) and mail a copy of your responses to: PASSAGE Newsletter, BCALMC, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, Pennsylvania 15027. Also, you can contact the PASSAGE staff at 1-800-345-5443 (PA Toll Free).

*Please check the appropriate job title or classification which best describes you.*

- Student
- Adult Basic Education Instructor
- Volunteer Tutor
- Job Trainer/Developer
- Career Counselor
- Program Director
- Librarian
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Optional

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Organization: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

Is PASSAGE mailed directly to you?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Do you give PASSAGE to someone else to read?

Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

If so, who do you give PASSAGE to and why? Would you like to add his/her name to the PASSAGE mailing list?

*How do you use the PASSAGE newsletter?*

- Supplemental Academic Materials
- Career/Job-Search Resource
- Networking Tool
- Staff-Development Training
- Personal/Career-Related Development
- Informational Update (labor-market trends, purchasing new resources, or changes in today's workplace)
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

*Please check all subject areas that are of interest to you or your organization.*

1.  Employer-employee expectations: on-the-job requirements and how to prepare, meet, and exceed the needs of the employer.
2.  Classroom skills that are utilized in the workplace: public speaking, math, and writing.
3.  Success stories which highlight the triumphs of adult learners who have improved their situations by furthering their education and by starting rewarding careers.
4.  Job-search strategies: preparing job-search materials and learning interviewing techniques.
5.  Highlighting career fields: educational requirements, experience, and job duties.
6.  Highlighting successful programs and services available across the Commonwealth.
7.  Technology and who it affects in today's and tomorrow's workplace.

*Continued on page 8*

Continued from page 7

8. \_\_\_ Counseling: Concerns of adult learners who continue their education and prepare to enter the work force.

9. \_\_\_ Labor-market trends: growing/declining occupations and the skills needed for success.

10. \_\_\_ Special needs of adult learners: additional services that help them achieve their goals.

Provide an example of how PASSAGE was helpful to you.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Please evaluate the following areas of the PASSAGE newsletter.

**Content** (topics presented in PASSAGE)

\_\_\_ Excellent \_\_\_ Good \_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_ Poor

**Readability** (writing style/reading level)

\_\_\_ Excellent \_\_\_ Good \_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_ Poor

**Design** (layout and general appearance)

\_\_\_ Excellent \_\_\_ Good \_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_ Poor

**Utility** (useful to your particular needs)

\_\_\_ Excellent \_\_\_ Good \_\_\_ Fair \_\_\_ Poor

Additional comments on PASSAGE's content, design, readability, and utility:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Tell Us About Your Program.

Networking with instructors and program operators from the many educational and career-assistance programs across the Commonwealth has enabled the PASSAGE staff to have a clearer understanding of the adult-learners' special needs. Also, the newsletter staff has been able to highlight successful programs and innovative approaches to training and development that have inspired and provided ideas for other programs and their participants.

Let us know about your special programs, services, and student-success stories. Check the following selections that may be of interest to you.

\_\_\_ I would like to write an article for PASSAGE.

\_\_\_ I have resources that may be of interest to PASSAGE's readers.

\_\_\_ I have a student-success story that could be highlighted in PASSAGE.

\_\_\_ I am sponsoring a workshop or training session that could be of interest to adult instructors or learners involved in educational/career-related programs.

If you are interested in contributing to the newsletter, make sure you have included your name, address, and telephone number.

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*The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.*

## What It Takes To Get Promoted

You'll improve your chances for promotion if you bring certain characteristics and skills to the job. Although requirements vary from job to job and from company to company, two college professors asked bosses to list and rank 10 factors that are important when considering promotion.



- Being involved in volunteer, professional, and community activities. Executives encourage participation in professional associations, conferences, and charity work that make the individual and company look good. □

*Source: Secretary's Letter, 8 Depot Square, Englewood, NJ 07631*

- **The No. 1 skill:** the ability to communicate. Just about all the people surveyed mentioned speaking, writing, listening, and reading abilities in their top 10.

*Others in the top five:*

- The ability to make decisions. Bosses prefer to promote people who don't shrink from making decisions--even at the risk of being wrong.
- Being team players. Employees who are cooperative, well-liked, and willing to sacrifice personal wishes for the good of the team are valued--according to 75 percent of the respondents.

### Have You Returned Your Survey?

Check your January 1994 issue of *PASSAGE* (pages seven and eight) for the annual Reader Survey. In the past, this survey has proven to be extremely beneficial to the newsletter's development and to better meeting the needs of the readers. The deadline for completion of the survey is March 7, 1994. Your assistance is greatly appreciated. Thanks! (If you would prefer to complete the survey by telephone, the *PASSAGE* Staff can be reached at 1-800-345-5443--PA Toll Free.) □

## Focus: The Ingredients Of A Good Resume (Part One)

This month's STUDENTaccesspage answers some of the more common questions asked about what information should be included in a resume. As you read this article and prepare your resume, realize that a variety of factors (education, experience, or age) will affect the content, organization, and design of your resume. What works in one person's resume may not be appropriate for another person. Remember, every resume is unique and should highlight the special strengths and abilities of the job seeker.



or no hands-on work experience, your educational experience should be listed first. When you have solid employment and educational experience, the section that best sells you to the employer should be placed first in order of importance.

### **What information should be included in the educational experience section of my resume?**

You should include the type of degree or certificate you have earned, the date of graduation (unless it was over ten years ago), grade point average, detailed examples of internship or related-work experience obtained at school, special honors, related activities (member of a club/organization), and types of courses you attended (list the courses that relate directly to the position you are seeking).

### **What basic information should be included in a resume?**

Try to always include your name, address, and telephone number; job objective (profile or career goal); educational history; work history; and work-related accomplishments and activities.

### **What type of format should I choose when I organize my resume?**

There are two main types of resume formats: chronological and functional.

The chronological resume is used by individuals who have experience in the particular field that they are targeting for employment. This design highlights job experience and organizes it in backward order—starting from the present date and working backwards. Listing examples of past work responsibilities, job titles, and dates are important parts of this design.

The functional resume is used by individuals who have limited work experience or are switching career fields. Attention is placed on education, skills, and strengths instead of job experience. Attention is not given to dates and job titles. If you use this format, be clear on what specific type of job you are seeking. This format will not be effective if it is targeted for just any job opening.

### **What should appear first in my resume—education or work experience?**

This relates to the previous question. If you have practical work experience in the field you are targeting, list your work experience first in the job objective section of your resume. If educational experience is your strong point and you have little

### **Should I include my age in some section of the resume?**

You should leave this out of your resume. The focus should be on your strengths and abilities. If you are capable of getting the job done effectively, let the employer make a decision based on your qualifications, not on whether you are too old or too young.

### **Do I need to list information about my health?**

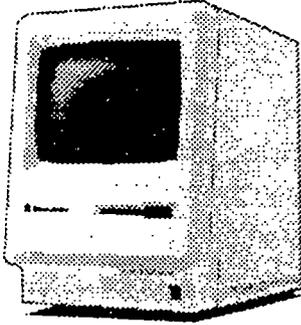
If your health will not interfere with your everyday job duties and performance, do not include any information about your health on your resume. You should not give the employer an unnecessary reason to eliminate you from the list of potential new hires.

### **Should I include information about my marital status?**

This is not necessary. Unfortunately, some employers may, consciously or subconsciously, believe that married individuals with children are a risk or that individuals with families are more settled down and make better employees. Don't worry about your marital status. Give the employer a chance to meet you in person and to judge you based on your abilities and personality. □

*Check the March 1994 issue of PASSAGE for Part Two of this article.*

# ALEX Can Help Your Job Search.



If you are currently conducting a job search, you should consider using ALEX (Automated Labor Exchange) as one of your many sources of potential job leads. ALEX is available for use at your local Job Center and is the latest in computerized job and job-seeker matching.

This user-friendly computer program enables job seekers to browse through jobs that are available in their county, in Pennsylvania, or throughout the United States. Don't worry about being a computer expert; the staff and a set of instructions guide you through the program and your search. (In fact, you only need to use four computer keys!)

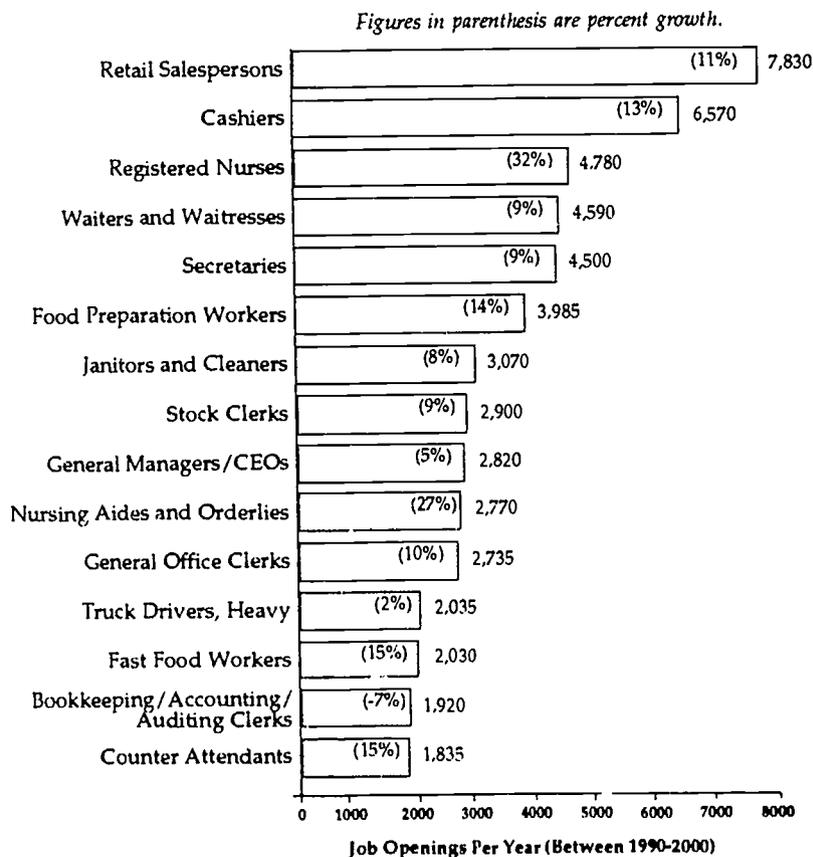
This service is also free of charge. Whether you are employed or underemployed, ALEX is available to assist you.

Once you locate a job that relates to your interests and training/experience, your local Job Center can help you find more information about the job and can help you contact the potential employer. All that is required of you is to complete a simple Information Request Form.

In addition to civilian jobs, ALEX also has the ability to show you the many federal job opportunities that are available and how to apply for them. Active duty military personnel or veterans can type in their Military Occupational Code (MOC) and access all job openings that relate to the training they received in the Military.

For more information about ALEX and the nearest Job Center location, call 1-800-622-JOBS. □

## Occupations With The Most Job Openings in PA



Source: Pennsylvania Department of Labor and Industry, Bureau of Research and Statistics

## Why Do Employers Hire Temporary Workers?

According to a recent Accountemps survey of 1,000 executives, the reasons companies use temporary workers are:

- For short-term projects and peak work periods--this includes busy times such as the Christmas holiday (47%)
- For absent employees (17%)
- To evaluate a potential full-time employee (15%)
- To avoid excessive overtime and burnout of current employees (8%)
- To save money (7%)
- Don't know (6%). □

# Getting Things Done: *Tips on Mastering Goals, Priorities, Time-Wasters, Paperwork, Deadlines, and Delegation*

Have you ever felt that you can never get ahead of your work load or commitments? Do you feel you could be devoting more time to activities that are creative or related to your personal career interests? Are you overwhelmed by outside disturbances and constantly getting side-tracked? If you ask yourself similar questions, there is a resource that may be of assistance to you.

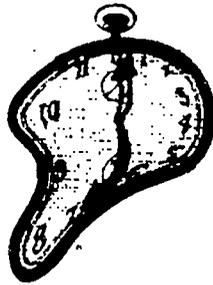
Whether you are attending school, are conducting a job search, or are currently employed, the video seminar **Getting Things Done** can provide you with valuable techniques that will help you make the most of your time and organize/achieve your goals (personal/professional). These techniques can be beneficial in all aspects of life.

The presenter of this two-part video seminar is Ed Bliss. He has served as a consultant to the staff of the United States Supreme Court, as well as many major corporations, including IBM, General Electric, and Bell Laboratories.

*Volume one of the video tape discusses:*

**Setting Goals and Defining Priorities** - Establishing specific goals, setting deadlines, dealing with sacrifice, establishing an effective "to do list", and identifying critical areas (most beneficial and rewarding tasks).

**Maximizing Prime Time and Overcoming Time Wasters** - Using prime times of the day for important activities (scheduling



this time and protecting it) and minimizing interruptions (tips for dealing with coworkers, bosses, and friends).

*Volume two of the video tape discusses:*

**Handling Paperwork, Deadlines, and Bottlenecks** - Minimizing paperwork, identifying the payoff you get for the time you spend on a project, eliminating clutter/distractions, establishing time-saving techniques and short-cuts, and helping you and your coworkers meet deadlines.

## **Understanding Delegation and Getting the Most from**

**Meetings** - Learning how to use the delegation process to your benefit, learning time-saving tips for meetings, attacking procrastination (breaking tasks down into small steps), and becoming an effective person. (This section is helpful primarily to individuals who work in an office setting.)

For more information, write to CareerTrack Publications, 1755 38th Street, Boulder, CO 80301-2639 or call (303) 440-7440. In addition, a copy of **Getting Things Done** is available at the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center, 5347 William Flynn Highway, Route 8, Gibsonia, PA 15044-9644. ☐

## Inspirational Advice For Everyday Life

Author H. Jackson Brown has a series of books that offer suggestions, observations, and reminders on how to live a happy and rewarding life. The following quotes were taken from his book, **Life's Little Instruction Book, Volume Two**. Perhaps these particular suggestions can help you as you expand your knowledge, make career decisions, and develop a career path.

*"Wear a shirt and tie to job interviews, even for a job unloading boxcars."*

*"Dress a little better than your clients but not as well as your boss."*

*"Perform your job better than anyone else can. That's the best job security I know."*

*"Pay as much attention to the things that are working positively in your life as you do to those that are giving you trouble."*

*"Don't waste time waiting for inspiration. Begin, and inspiration will find you."*

*"Start every day with the most important thing you have to do. Save the less important for later."*

*"Don't let weeds grow around your dreams."*

*"There are people who will always come up with reasons why you can't do what you do. Ignore them."*

\* For more information about this publication, contact your local bookstore. ☐

# Why Am I Working Here?

The Families and Work Institute conducted a study that takes a look at the work and personal/family lives of U.S. workers. The nationwide survey included 3,381 workers. One of the many areas explored in the survey was "the reasons employees give as being important when they decided to take a job with their current

employer." *The results were:*

- 60 percent listed open communication
- 60 percent listed the effect on personal/family life
- 59 percent listed the nature of the work
- 59 percent listed quality of management

- 35 percent listed salary/wage levels

Also, in the survey, when employees were asked to define what success at work means to them, more than half responded, "the personal satisfaction they received in doing a good job." This factor was reported twice as much as money and advancement. □

## The Zen and the Art of Making a Living

"The Zen and the Art of Making a Living" is a new career-planning guide written by career consultant Lawrence Boldt. This innovative guide was written for individuals who want to take an in-depth look at career options and personal dreams. However, with 600 pages, this is definitely not a book for individuals who are looking for a quick career change or need to find employment quickly.

The author stresses the idea that work should be enjoyable. A great deal of effort and searching is needed to find the area of work that will make you happy and realize many of your dreams. His philosophy is that work should be more than just paying bills and reporting to the office.

*The book is divided into four sections or acts which include:*

- "The Quest" - This section helps you identify your values and interests and determine what type of work will be most satisfying.
- "The Game" - After you have defined your interests and direction, this section helps you work towards finding, or sometimes shaping, a career or occupation that matches your specific needs.
- "The Battle" - This section assists you with taking a realistic look at your career choices and evaluating the possibilities of success and happiness.
- "The School" - In this section, the importance of education and training is stressed. The author encourages each individual to develop a lifelong-learning process.

This book was written for those, as the author states, "who want to create a work they really love to do."

\* To obtain a copy of *The Zen and the Art of Making a Living*, check your local bookstore. □

## Dual-Income Couples

The U.S. Department of Commerce predicts that by the year 2000 dual-income families (both spouses work) are expected to include as much as 80 percent of all couples. Currently, the 1993 Employee Relocation Council studies indicate that 59 percent of all couples are in dual-income situations. The number of dual-income families in 1980 was 51 percent and in 1985 was 55 percent. □

## passage

*"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"*

**Editors:** Bernadette Mangie, Director, Education and Support Programs; John S. Goberish, Communications

**BCALMC Consultants:** Richard Carland, Workforce Education Specialist; Alex Garcia, Executive Director; Alice Green, Technical Advisor; Greg Hill, EAPC Coordinator, and Lee Katroppa, GED Instructor.

For more information, call 1-800-345-5443 or write to: PASSAGE, BCALMC, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, PA 15027.

# Career Opportunities In The Security Industry

By Christopher A. Hertig, CPP, CPO

In today's job market, few career fields show major growth. However, jobs in the security industry are currently increasing, and for many individuals who are considering career possibilities, a career in security may be an attractive option.

While the most attention and recognition go to public policing, private security employs at least twice as many people as local, state, and federal law enforcement agencies combined. With an annual growth rate of six percent and no downward trends in sight, the future looks bright for those providing guard, alarm, and investigative services.

*The reasons for the availability of jobs include:*

- an increase in the rate of crime coupled with a greater awareness of crime problems by the public.
- a shortage of public resources to deal with problems. (Most police departments cannot afford to hire more officers, and many are actually decreasing in size by not replacing officers who resign, retire, or are disabled.
- greater federal regulation through statutes such as the Right to Know Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, the Bloodborn Pathogens Act, and the Campus Security and Student Right to Know Act. All of these pieces of



legislation affect security operations as the security department is usually the part of the organization charged with carrying out these legal mandates.

- more state regulation such as Pennsylvania's Lethal Weapons Training Act which has increased the training and certification requirements for armed guards and investigators. Currently, Florida has an extensive security training requirement, and New York has just passed a similar requirement. Also, Maryland is considering legislation, and Pennsylvania presently has two bills before the U.S. Congress.
- lawsuits against the owners of apartments, hotels, nightclubs, parking garages, and other businesses because of criminal assaults on patrons and customers.
- increased terrorist threats which are linked to world events in the Middle East. (The World Trade Center bombing was but one example of this threat.)
- more demanding regulation of security forces by federal agencies such as the Federal Aviation Administration,

Nuclear Regulatory Commission, and Department of Energy.

- the Joint Commission on the Accreditation of Healthcare Organizations is currently making standards for security departments at hospitals.

All of the factors mentioned above create a demand for professional protection. There is a dramatic increase in the use of contract security services. Private investigators are making good profits. More celebrities and employers are using personal protection specialists. Also, alarm companies have expanded into the residential alarm market, and the use of security consultants is growing.

Preparing for a career in security and investigation requires a thorough knowledge of what business organizations are doing and what security companies are offering. A review of the Yellow Pages can provide a "snapshot" of the industry; but most of the real career opportunities are not highly publicized. Persons assessing the potential for a career should take time to learn about careers in the investigation and security industry.

*The PASSAGE Editors wish to thank Mr. Hertig for sharing this knowledge with the PASSAGE readership. Mr. Hertig teaches security management and criminal justice at York College of Pennsylvania. In addition, he is the author of the book "Careers In Security and Investigation."*

*Continued on page 7*

## Continued...Career Opportunities In The Security Industry

The following organizations can provide information concerning the security industry:

1. The American Society for Industrial Security (ASIS) is a very large organization of managers, security directors, and chiefs of investigation departments. The Society has scholarships for college students through the ASIS Foundation and a job-placement service for members. ASIS has an Academic Programs' Committee and a Security Resource Center.

**American Society for Industrial Security**  
1655 North Fort Myer Drive, Suite 1200  
Arlington, VA 22209 (703) 522-5800

2. The International Foundation for Protection Officers is a nonprofit organization dedicated to the professional development and training of entry-level security officers and first-line supervisors.

The Foundation publishes a newsletter, several books, and offers certification programs for security professionals.

**International Foundation for Protection Officers**  
Bellingham Business Park  
#200, 4200 Meridian, Bellingham, WA 98226  
(206) 733-1571

3. Butterworth-Heinemann is the largest publisher of security texts. The firm has books on investigation, alarm systems, disaster planning, fire protection, training, and many other topics.

Butterworth-Heinemann also publishes "Security Journal."

**Butterworth-Heinemann**  
80 Montvale Avenue, Stoneham, MA 02180  
(800) 544-1013

*Continued on page 8*

## More About Careers in the Security Industry...

### Nature of the Work

In general, individuals working in the security industry (guards or security officers) patrol and inspect property to protect against fire, theft, vandalism, and illegal entry. The different types of employers vary.

*Some examples include:*

- office buildings
- hospitals
- department stores
- airports
- railroads
- public and government buildings
- factories
- laboratories
- sporting events
- conventions
- valuables that are transported

Guards can be stationed at desks/gates to monitor electronic security and to check credentials of visitors,

or guards can be responsible for patrolling grounds.

### Training Requirements and Qualifications

Most employers prefer individuals who have a high school/GED diploma. Additional education (college) can improve chances for a promotion to supervisory positions and can improve job security.

The amount of training guards receive depends on the employer. On-the-job training may include protection, public relations, report writing, first aid, crisis deterrence, and operation of computerized security systems.

Guards can work for agencies that provide security services on contract (contract security agencies) or directly for an employer on a full-time basis.

Nearly all states require licensing or registration for

guards who work for contract agencies. To obtain a license as a guard, individuals must be 18 years old, pass a background examination, and complete classroom training in such subjects as property rights, emergency procedures, and seizure of suspected criminals.

Individuals in this career field are expected to have good character references, no police record, good health (especially hearing and vision), and good personal habits such as neatness and dependability.

### Related Occupations

Related security and protective service occupations include: Bailiffs, border guards, corrections' officers, deputy sheriffs, fish and game wardens, house or store detectives, police officers, and private investigators. □

*Source: Occupational Outlook Handbook*

## Books On Private Security

*With the rapid growth in the employment of private guards, investigators, and personal protection specialists, there are many books available which detail the career opportunities.*

**Private Security and the Investigative Process** by Charles Nemeth is available from Anderson Publishing Company (513) 412-4142.

**The American Society of Industrial Security**, (703) 522-5800, carries various books, videos, and pamphlets relating to security.

**Security Consulting and the Protection Officer Training Manual** are published by Butterworth-Heinemann (800) 366-2665.

**Careers In Security and Investigation and The Private Investigator's Professional Desk Reference** are produced by the International Foundation for Protection Officers (206) 733-1571.

**Suggested Preparation For Careers In Security/Loss Prevention** is published by Kenhall/Hunt Publishing Company (319) 588-1451.

**Getting A Job, Getting Ahead, and Staying Ahead in Security Management** is published by Rusting Publications (516) 883-1440.

## Books On Criminal Justice Careers

With the attention that police and the courts receive, there may be many individuals who wish to pursue a career in criminal justice. Below are a few books on careers in criminal justice.

**Career Planning In Criminal Justice** by Robert C. DeLucia and Thomas J. Doyle and **Law Enforcement Career Planning** by Thomas Mahoney are available from Knight Management Corporation (800) 732-3659.

**Seeking Employment In Law Enforcement, Private Security, and Related Fields** by Harr and Hess is produced by West Publishing (800) 328-9352.

**Suggested Preparation For Careers In Security/Loss Prevention** by John Chuvala and Dr. Robert Fischer is published by Kendall/Hunt (319) 588-1451.

**Landing a Law Enforcement Job and How To Be a Great Cop** by Neal Trautman is available from Trautman Enterprises (407) 339-0322.

**Careers In Security and Investigation** by Christopher Hertig is published by the International Foundation for Protection Officers (206) 733-1571.

## Books On Private Investigation

The use of private investigators (those who work for others in exchange for a fee) is growing. Businesses and various divisions of government need to investigate prospective employees, narcotics use, and incidents of theft. Insurance companies must investigate fraudulent claims and locate missing persons. A few books that are useful to persons seeking a career in private investigation are listed below.

**Careers In Security and Investigation and the Private Investigator's Professional Desk Reference** are both published by the International Foundation for Protection Officers (206) 733-1571.

**Private Security and the Investigative Process** by Charles Nemeth is published by Anderson Publishing (513) 421-4142.

**The Process of Investigation** by Charles Sennewald as well as other text on investigation are available from Butterworth-Heinemann (800) 366-2665. □

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*The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.*

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## Getting The Word Out

*A report by the Department of Labor once asked several thousand employed individuals how they obtained their jobs. The results of the survey revealed that:*



- 48 percent found their jobs through family, friends, and acquaintances.
- 25 percent obtained employment from cold contacts. (Going to the employer and inquiring about employment opportunities.)
- 6 percent secured jobs through the placement services at their schools.
- 5 percent used the help-wanted advertisements in the newspaper.
- 3 percent obtained employment through public-employment agencies.
- 1 percent secured jobs through private-employment agencies.
- 13 percent used a combination of approaches to find employment.

Most job seekers who read these statistics for the first time are surprised. The findings reveal

some interesting points that today's and tomorrow's job seekers must remember about most employers' hiring practices. For example, most employers would prefer to:

- Hire people they know or people who are recommended by coworkers or friends.
- Consider job seekers who have made an effort to find employment before job openings become available. Also, these job seekers stand out because they get ahead of the stacks of resumes that are common when word of a job opening is released to the general public.
- Advertise job openings "in-house" before using help-wanted advertisements or an employment agency.

These hiring practices require job seekers to become skilled at "getting the word out" about their abilities--networking. Unfortunately, many job seekers are uncomfortable with their situations and would rather not advertise that they are looking

Continued on page 2

Continued from page one

for employment. Often the only area of focus is the help-wanted sections or employment agencies which together only amount to nine percent of all successful job hires.

If you are conducting a job search, try to include as many people as possible in your network. Nearly everyone can be of some help. You can use networking to obtain advice for conducting a job search, to receive a potential job lead, or to have someone who will listen to your successes and difficulties.

By showing that you are dedicated to your job search and will work hard, most people you talk to will feel a special interest in providing you with assistance. As long as you are not overly persistent or not contacting people at inconvenient times, you will find that most people truly want to help you with your job search.

Where can networking take place? The job seeker should find ways of networking in almost any place or situation.

*For example, networking can take place:*

- In the classroom.
- At little league games.
- During social gatherings.
- At the job service.
- During telephone conversations with friends.
- At the grocery store.
- At church events.
- During a visit to the doctor's office.
- At the bank.

*(Basically, you can network just about anywhere.)*



The job seeker really needs to be marketing himself/herself at all times. The idea is to never stop building contacts. In addition, you are educating yourself about the current job market. You are promoting yourself/abilities, getting out of the house, and making things happen for yourself.

Lastly, once you build your network of people interested in your job search, be sure to stay in touch with these individuals. Make sure they have an updated copy of your resume and call them occasionally to update them on your progress. □

## Job-Search Resources

*The following publications can help you prepare a successful job-search campaign and can be found in your local library or book store:*

**The Job Hunter's Manual,**  
Addison-Wesley

**How To Write Better Resumes,**  
Adele Lewis

**Job Hunting Handbook,** Harry  
S. Dahlstrom

**Where Do I Go From Here  
With My Life?,** John C. Crystal  
and Richard Bolles

**One on One,** Theodore Pettus

**What Color Is Your Parachute?,**  
Richard Bolles

**The Job Market,** Richard  
Lathrop

**A Job Hunter's Handbook,**  
Elliott Bernstein

**Guerrilla Tactics In The Job  
Market,** Tom Jackson □

## Motivational Quotes

"Never allow your energy or enthusiasm to be dampened by the discouragements that must inevitably come."

James Whitcomb Riley, poet

"Whatever the mind can conceive and believe, the mind can achieve."

Napoleon Hill

"Thinking will not overcome fear, but action will."

W. Clement Stone

"Many persons think that by hoarding money they are gaining safety for themselves. If money is your only hope for independence, you will never have it. The only real security that a person can have in this world is a reserve of knowledge, experience, and ability. Without these qualities, money is practically useless."

Henry Ford

"I couldn't wait for success--so I went ahead without it."

Jonathan Winters

"To do great important tasks, two things are necessary; a plan and not quite enough time."

Anonymous

"Wealth is thoughts, not things."

Robert G. Allen

## Focus: The Ingredients of a Good Resume (Part Two)

This is the second part of last month's *STUDENTaccesspage* which will focus on typical questions that are asked about resume writing and what information should be included in a resume. As stated in part one of last month's article, each resume requires special considerations and should best reflect the unique talents, skills, and abilities of the job seeker. Use part one and two as a reference when you are preparing your resume.



resume. However, if done correctly, this section can help sell your abilities to the potential employer.

### **Should I include my salary expectations on the resume?**

No. Avoid listing or discussing salary expectations until you have received a job offer. If you disclose your salary expectations too early, you could price yourself out of a job before you even get a chance to meet the potential employer.

### **Should I ever include my picture on or with my resume?**

Unless you are applying for an acting position or a job as an on-air talent (television), never include your picture in a resume. With the many cost-effective and attractive print capabilities of a computer/laser printer, some resume services may try to market this format which includes your picture on the front page of the resume. In general, employers do not welcome this format. Remember, you only need to highlight your skills, experience, and education on the resume. The focus is your ability to meet the various job requirements.

### **What information is appropriate to include in the Activities or Personal Interest Section of my resume?**

Include information that shows your interest and participation in community-related activities. Examples can include volunteer work, parent-teacher organizations, and the Lions Club. Highlight any activities or hobbies that may relate to the job you are targeting (e.g., a writer's club or computer-networking group). Also, briefly mentioning any interest in personal health and fitness can be a welcomed addition to this section of the resume (e.g., bicycling, jogging, aerobics, or CPR training). Avoid listing information that may not positively enhance your consideration for employment by an employer. Unlike the work and education experience sections of the resume, this section does not have to be included in your

### **How many pages should be included in my resume?**

You should be able to highlight all of the information that will interest the employer on one page. Using two pages is also acceptable. However, if you need to use two pages, try to make sure that at least half of the second page contains written information. (Keep in mind that most employers have a limited amount of time and have many resumes to review. Don't be too wordy.)

### **What type and color of paper are appropriate for printing my resume?**

Use a quality linen-finished or rag paper. This paper will convey a professional image and will help the print/ink stand out. Make sure the paper weight is between 20 and 25 pounds and the

*Continued on page 4*

## passage

*"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"*

**Editors:** Bernadette Mangie, Director, Education and Support Programs; John S. Goberish, Communications

**BCALMC Consultants:** Richard Carland, Workforce Education Specialist; Beverly Covatch-Dicken, Literacy Support Specialist; Alex Garcia, Executive Director; Alice Green, Technical Advisor; and Greg Hill, EAPC Coordinator, and Lee Katroppa, GED Instructor.

For more information, call 1-800-345-5443 or write to: **PASSAGE, BCALMC, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, PA 15027.**

## STUDENT *accesspage continued from page three*

dimensions of the paper are 8 1/2 X 11. As for color, it is in your best interest to use a light color such as white, cream, ivory, or gray. While it is your objective to get the employer's attention, don't shock him/her with bright or neon colors. (In addition, make sure that you use the same paper stock for printing your cover letter which will accompany your resume.

### Do I need to include my social security number on the resume?

This is not necessary. The employer may ask for this at a later date, but it does not have to be included on the resume.

### Should I include the reasons for leaving a previous place of work?

Definitely not. The resume should remain positive. Leave this subject for the interview. (If the employer asks you this question during the interview, do not talk negatively about your former employer or coworkers. Again, remain positive and highlight your abilities.)

### What are some helpful suggestions that can "spice-up" my resume and can help my resume stand out?

*If it applies and/or is possible in your situation...*

- Have your resume prepared using a good word-processing program (i.e., WordPerfect) and a laser printer. Your resume will look professional, and you can easily save your resume in the computer and can revise it for special situations or updates.

### Resume Example (Improving Readability)

**Lisa Simpson**  
102 Homer Drive  
Springfield, Pennsylvania 91919  
(919) 919-9191

**Objective**  
To obtain a position in Sales that will utilize my skills and experience and provide opportunity for growth.

**Experience**  
The Home Improvements Company,  
Springfield, PA September 1991 to Present

**Sales Representative**

- Contacting potential customers and selling home improvement products and services to customers.
- Assisting in the development of new strategies to increase sales and customer awareness.
- Writing weekly reports.
- Organizing lists of customers/addresses on a computer data base.

- **Indicate** on the resume that you are willing to consider relocation and travel. This shows the employer that you are serious about your career.
- **Include** any foreign languages that you may know. In a global marketplace, this skill could be very important to a company.
- **Use** titles, subtitles, and bullet statements to improve readability. Use bolding, italics, and underlining sparingly; use these tools to make the most important pieces of information stand out. (See example.)
- **List** military service or security-clearance information. Depending on the employer and your experience, this information could help you in obtaining an interview.

### Do I need to print "References Available Upon Request" at the end of the resume?

This is often a good idea. It signals the end of the resume and lets employers know that you have a prepared list of individuals they can contact when considering you for employment. However, it is not a necessity that this line is included on your resume. (Note: Do not include the names of references on your resume. This information should be prepared on a separate sheet which can be given to the potential employer upon request.)

*If you have any questions that were not addressed in this series on resume preparation, please call PASSAGE at 1-800-345-5443 or write to: PASSAGE Newsletter, BCALMC, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, Pennsylvania 15027. □*

## How To Accept A Compliment

Do you have a problem accepting compliments?  
Do you often answer with "oh, it was nothing"?

Be aware that deflecting a compliment often draws unwanted attention and belittles both you and the person offering the compliment.

Instead, just say, "Thank you."

You'll be pleased at how well it works.

Source: *The Wellness Book*, by Dr. Herbert Benson and Eileen M. Stuart, Birch Lane Press, 600 Madison Ave., New York, NY 10022. □

# Could You Be A Manager?

Here is a list of traits that employees ought to have if they want to be promoted to management positions, says the Levinson Letter.

*Employees must:*

- Want to be managers because they're comfortable in the position, not just for money or power.
- Be able to ease stress for themselves and subordinates.
- Trust their own judgement enough to work with a minimum of feedback from higher management.
- Be able to handle different situations well most of the time.

- Channel other people's hostility to solve the problems at hand. □

*Source: The Levinson Letter, The Levinson Institute, Cambridge, MA, as cited in The Great Book of Business Secrets, 330 W. 42nd St. New York, NY 10036.*

## The Perfect Boss

*When 266 professionals, ages 25-35, were asked what trait should the "perfect" boss possess, they responded:*

- Leadership by example (26%)
- Strong management skills (26%)
- Strong communicator (12%)
- Takes responsibility for group actions (7%) □

*Source: Dunhill Personnel System Inc., Woodbury, N.Y.*

## Dos And Don'ts For The Job Interview

### Dos

- Be prepared to state your purpose when you arrive for the interview.
- Shake hands firmly and stand until offered a chair.
- Learn the interviewer's name and use it.
- Be pleasant and friendly but businesslike.
- Ask questions—after all, you want to make sure the job is right for you.
- Be positive and stress your strong points. Be honest about your weaknesses, but don't dwell on them.
- Tell the employer you are interested in the job and why you think you are qualified.
- Remember to thank the employer for interviewing you.
- If the employer does not tell you when you will hear about the job, ask when you may call to learn of his/her decision.



### Don'ts

- Never take anyone with you to an interview.
- Don't plead for a job or a chance.
- Never say, "I'll take anything." Instead say that you'll work hard, especially if there is a chance to move up.
- In discussing jobs you held before, don't criticize former employers or coworkers.
- Don't discuss your personal problems, home problems, or money problems. Try to answer only what relates to the job.
- Don't smoke, even if the interviewer does.
- Don't tell a prospective employer about jobs you applied for and were turned down.
- Don't apologize for lack of experience or training; stress your strong points instead (learn quickly, assume responsibility, etc.).
- Don't hang around after the interview. □

*Source: Pennsylvania Career Guide, POICC*

# Overcoming The Fear of Public Speaking

Did you know that according to the **Book of Lists**, speaking before a group was ranked as the number one fear? Public speaking is feared more than heights, snakes, death, illness, financial problems, and deep water. For most people, even the thought of giving a public presentation creates ill feelings.



Why do most people avoid public speaking? Basically, this is a natural reaction to this situation. Believe it or not, even the most professional and polished speakers, get nervous before a speaking engagement.

Everyone has the same reaction. Most of us fear that we may appear unprepared and embarrass ourselves in front of an audience. We don't want to be perceived as failures, and we are uncertain of how we will look to the audience.

So, why are some people very talented and accomplished at public speaking? The answer is simple. They constantly work at improving their communication skills and make an effort to prepare themselves for each speaking event. They take their nervous energy and put it to good use. This means that anyone, with the right attitude, approach, and practice, can be successful at public speaking.

## The Benefits

Now that we have dispelled the myth that one has to be born with special public-speaking skills, let's look at the benefits of learning these valuable skills.

1. In today's work environments, having solid public-speaking skills can only

enhance your potential for on-the-job growth. These skills can be used in meetings with supervisors, coworkers, and customers. While communication skills have always been important for managers, instructors, and salespeople, other career fields have job responsibilities/skill requirements that are changing and expanding.

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*Research indicates that 80 percent of the average person's waking hours is spent communicating... speaking, listening, reading, and writing.*

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This has created a need for improved communication skills in jobs where it once was not a great concern. For example, in today's global marketplace, companies and their customers are demanding higher quality products and services. With this trend, it is not uncommon for customers (i.e., a car manufacturer) to visit a factory or plant (i.e., a steel production facility) to talk with workers and learn about the people and operations involved in producing the product they are purchasing.

Another example includes the growing trend toward establishing work teams and giving employees more decision-making opportunities. In this work environment, employees who learn to effectively use their communication skills will be more valuable to the company and its success.

2. Public-speaking skills increase one's self confidence. By coming to terms with the fears associated with public speaking, individuals eliminate many barriers that may have affected their personal and professional development. Many new possibilities and opportunities become available because their actions are not frozen by anxiety.

3. Participating in community activities or clubs that may require public contact becomes easier and more enjoyable. Have you ever wanted to become more involved at school-board meetings, during church services, or at a local computer-operator support group? Often, having to do public speaking is the one reason people choose not to become involved.

*Continued on page 7*

"The mind is a wonderful thing. It starts working the minute you're born and never stops until you get up to speak in public."

Anonymous Humor

"I have often been afraid, but I would not give in to it. I simply acted as though I was not afraid, and presently the fear disappeared."

Theodore Roosevelt

Continued from page 6

## Becoming An Excellent Public Speaker

With the understanding that public-speaking skills can benefit you in all aspects of life and that everyone has the ability to be successful at presenting to a group, what can be done to learn this skill and build confidence?

*Below is a list of tips that speakers use when preparing for a presentation, for increasing belief in their abilities, and for coping with nervousness. Use this as a starting point for enhancing your own hidden skills and talents in this area.*

**Positive Programming** - Instead of telling yourself, "I can't speak in front of all those people," or "I'm too nervous,"--learn to tell yourself, "I'm prepared; I'm confident in my abilities; and I have something of value to share with the audience." Don't fill your mind with negative thoughts. By remaining positive, you are preparing yourself for success.

**Imagine Success** - If you know in advance that you will be speaking to a particular group of people, try to imagine yourself presenting the speech. In your mind, picture the room, the audience smiling and being receptive to your ideas and personality, and yourself confidently presenting the information. Repeat the entire sequence over and over in your mind. This will enable your mind and nervous system to prepare for success. Try it; it really works!

**Practice/Be Well Prepared** - This is not a great secret. By

practicing your speech, you improve your delivery and timing. Also, you increase your confidence and greatly reduce your anxiety. Once you organize the information for your speech, practice it in front of a mirror or read it to family members and friends. Tape record yourself and listen to your rate of speech, tone, content, and level of excitement. Practice it in the car on the way to your speaking engagement. In the area of public speaking, there is no such thing as over practicing your speech.

**Know Your Audience** - Whether you are speaking at your local civic club or to a group of your company's customers, you should conduct some research and learn about your audience. Try to learn their interests and concerns, and try to discover similarities they may have with you. This information will help you prepare for the speech, relate to the audience, and show that you care about the audience.

**Remember The Audience Is With You** - Always know that the audience has respect for the speaker. They want to see you succeed and learn something that can benefit them in life. Try to remember how you feel as a member of an audience; your audience members are no different. Take the time to prepare, and the audience and you will benefit from the experience.

**Speak About Something You Believe In** - In addition to preparation, your belief in a particular subject will help carry you through your presentation. It is much easier to reach an

audience and get them excited if you have a special interest in, and an enthusiasm for, the subject matter of your speech. Also, by focusing on your message, you will lessen anxiety and nervousness.

**Exercise/Take Care of Yourself** - Exercise can help relieve the nervous tensions that are associated with public speaking. Try jogging, vigorous walking, or stretching exercises for the arms and legs. Concentrate on taking deep breaths and relaxing your body before a presentation. (It wouldn't hurt to do this every day.) Be sure to get enough sleep; eight hours is usually the average amount of time. Finally, before a speech, avoid large meals, foods with large amounts of sugar, caffeine, and alcoholic beverages.

**Dress for Success** - Wear clothing that is appropriate for the event. For example, a suit outfit would be appropriate for a business meeting. Choose an outfit that is comfortable and that you enjoy wearing. This will increase your self confidence.

**Speak on a Regular Basis** - Each time you speak you get better and improve your skills. Stay sharp and welcome opportunities to enhance your speaking skills. □



# Workplace Trends and Statistics

## Turnover in the Workplace

- > A study mentioned in **Adult Lives** by J. Stevens-Long (Mayfield Publishing, 1990) states that between 50 percent and 60 percent of all new hires leave their jobs within the first seven months of employment. Tip: If you interviewed for a position at a company but did not get the job, you may want to contact them in the near future and let them know you are still interested in the position. You may find that there is another opening.

## Paperwork

- > According to research conducted by Booher Consultants Inc., white-collar employees spend an average of 43 percent of their work time on paperwork-related duties which includes reading letters, reports, and memos from others (10 hours a week) and writing letters, reports, and memos (nearly eight hours a week).

## Quality on the Rise

- > Some 94 percent of all manufacturers have quality-improvement programs in place, up from 84 percent in 1991. The Manufacturers' Alliance for Productivity and Innovation and Wyatt Company surveyed 126 manufacturers, who say the programs improved customer satisfaction and increased company profits.

## Employed "At Will"

- > The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics estimates that of the approximately 80 million Americans employed in the private sector, 60 million are

employed "at will."

Employed "at will" means that the employer has the right to terminate employees at any time without giving a legitimate reason.

## Senior Citizens In The Workplace

- > A survey by the employment agency Snelling and Snelling indicates that in the past two years, more senior citizens than ever have returned to the work force. The survey polled 275 of its personnel-services franchise offices. The main reasons for this increase included boredom and financial security.

## Resource Center Schedules Open House

On May 5 and 6, 1994, the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center located in Gibsonia, Pennsylvania, will be holding an Open House for adult education and literacy administrators, teachers, tutors, and counselors. If you haven't had a chance to visit the Center, this would be the perfect time to browse the shelves, scan the database, and network with colleagues.

*For more information, call 800-446-5607 ext. 216.*

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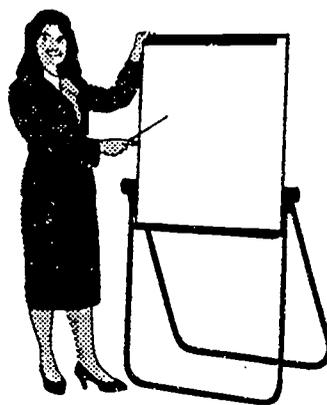
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## PASSAGE Special Edition

### *Learning Advocates: A Schore-Fire Way To Enhance Worker Training and Educational Programs.*



Lee Schore is an advocate of learning and an excellent trainer of learning advocates. Lee's goal is to help both active and displaced workers receive the best possible training and supportive services. How does she accomplish this goal? She introduces companies, unions, and organizations to the benefits of creating a trained team of learning advocates.

This special edition of PASSAGE will introduce us to information and insights that Lee Schore shares with everyone who wishes to implement learning-advocacy programs. As we read through the various topics covered in this special issue, we will most likely discover many ways to utilize and adapt Lee's ideas to meet the needs of the adult learners we serve in Pennsylvania's comprehensive programs of adult basic and literacy education.

PASSAGE extends a special thank you to Lee Schore who has provided us with the knowledge and inspiration we will need to begin the process of training and utilizing learning advocates.

*Lee Schore and the Center for Working Life staff have prepared an easy-to-read illustrated booklet (Starting Over: A Survival Guide for Laid-Off Workers and Their Families) that talks about the issues that workers and their families face during a layoff or a closure. For more information about this booklet you can contact Lee at Center for Working Life, 3814 SE Martins Street, Portland, OR 97202 or by calling (503) 774-6088.*



### Workers Remain Active Learners

*"Active and displaced workers retain their ability to learn throughout their lives."*

However, it's often difficult for workers to return to the classroom or to enter retraining programs whenever they face two common barriers: 1. the content of the materials and the methods of teaching are inappropriate for working people and, 2. they seldom have access to the resources and support they need to successfully complete their training and educational programs.

These barriers can become less formidable when planning and operating workplace-literacy and dislocated-worker programs if we understand the need for, and the value of, learning advocates.

According to Lee Schore's research and first-hand experiences, learning advocates break down these barriers by working cooperatively with the program planners, the teachers, and the workers. They bring a myriad of skills and information that make these programs successful—"they are the people who hold the program together."

### Learning Advocates Assume Many Roles

*"Learning advocates provide social support for the worker-training program."*

In comprehensive and collaborative worker-training programs, learning advocates can assume many important roles and responsibilities. They may serve as outreach, recruitment, and retention specialists. In some organizations, they may also have formal program-development, program-monitoring, and program-evaluation responsibilities.

However broad or limited their job descriptions, learning advocates share one common role--building trust. Building trust among the parties involved in the program becomes an important part of their jobs, and Lee Schore tells all learning advocates that their first obligation is to earn the trust of the individuals whom they are trying to attract to the training and educational programs.

We know that workers (active and dislocated) are more likely to participate in skills' training and degree-awarding programs whenever they can talk about their career-development needs with individuals they can trust.



Many learning advocates have already gained the workers' trust because the learning advocates share the workers' culture. In programs for active employees, the learning advocates may even work in the same departments and/or perhaps live in the same neighborhoods as the employees who are targeted for training. The trust between many learning advocates and their fellow workers has been built over a period of time and after a number of shared circumstances.

In training and educational programs for dislocated workers, it's beneficial to utilize learning advocates who can also relate to the personal and professional circumstances of their fellow unemployed. Workers who have recently lost their jobs need advocates who can relate to their feelings of anger, depression, and fear. Dislocated workers pass through these stages of emotions much quicker with the assistance of learning advocates who have overcome similar emotions and barriers.

Lee Schore also emphasizes the importance of training learning advocates who will participate in the training and educational programs with their fellow workers. Their participation sends the message that they understand and share the workers' experiences. She reminds us of the advantages of having learning advocates who, as the saying goes, "practice what they preach."

Although all programs do not have the resources and/or adopt the philosophy to invest in this broad-brushed job

description for learning advocates, we can easily recognize the benefits of having learning advocates as members of our career-development team.

What happens when our organizations do not offer us the philosophical or financial support to train a team of learning advocates? Lee Schore tells us not to be daunted but to be cautious. We can always form an informal network of learning advocates, a network of peer mentors and advisors who can be very effective. However, we need to be cautious about the responsibilities we give this informal network without the benefits of offering them more formalized training. Training programs for learning advocates expand upon their current knowledge and abilities to equip them with the specialized skills they need to do their outreach, recruitment, and retention jobs well and within the operational guidelines of our programs.

### Outreach and Recruitment

*"It may seem that the most important part of the outreach is getting information about the program to the workers. The truth is that the most important part of this process is helping the workers deal with the anxiety they feel."*

We can agree that getting information about the career-development program to the workers is critical. We often use common methods of dispensing program information, and these methods may not be totally effective for a number of reasons. The problem is that many workers choose not to read letters,

posters, or bulletin boards. Some workers can't read them.

Whether the workers don't read or can't read the program information dispensed to them does not present the biggest recruitment challenge. How to help them overcome their fears and anxieties becomes the more obvious challenge.

One way to get the information out is through personal contacts between the workers and the learning advocates. This point has been proven with the recruitment of workers who were on the borderline, not ready to make a decision about whether to, or not to, further their education or training. Through conversations with their learning advocates, they were better equipped to make decisions in favor of participation.

However, not all outreach efforts between learning advocates and workers are

immediately rewarding. Even among trusted friends, we shouldn't be surprised to hear words of skepticism and mistrust. Many workers feel pressured, frustrated, and afraid when talking about the possibility of participating in training and educational programs. Workers often have a difficult time sharing their fears of returning to the classroom with even their most trusted of coworkers. Their fears may even turn to anger.

We need to remind the learning advocates that the anger is not directed at them. Anger is a normal reaction to fear and to feelings of low self-esteem. Learning advocates should never act defensively in these situations. It's better for them to acknowledge the workers' anger and to reaffirm the position that the workers may find these programs beneficial. Learning advocates can extend an invitation to these workers to

## A Job Description for Learning Advocates

*If we are to create and operate effective career-development programs and services, there are a number of attractive qualities and skills that our learning advocates should be able to demonstrate, including their willingness to be...*

- Good listeners.
- Patient and understanding.
- Non-judgmental.
- Friendly and accessible.
- Responsible for follow-up promises.
- Humble and helpful.
- Program participants themselves.

Lee Shore reminds us that the most effective learning advocates are not outsiders or managers. They are workers who help their fellow workers become involved in career-development programs by being naturally caring, dependable, and resourceful people.

*These learning advocates combine their attitudes and behaviors to produce the type of individuals and relationships that guarantee the success of today's career-development programs.*

evaluate the program—"to give it a try and to see what they think."

When we train learning advocates, our job is to stress the importance of giving the workers the right information.

We need our learning advocates to know everything about the service they are promoting to their fellow workers. Equally important is their endorsement of how the training and educational program is handled by the instructors and trainers.

Learning advocates can be encouraged to take and monitor classes and training programs to view and evaluate the teaching methods and personalities of the professionals they will recommend to the workers.

### Retention and Recognition

As previously stated, learning advocates need to be active participants in the training and educational programs. In the classroom or training setting, the learning advocates have the opportunity to discover if the information being taught is easily grasped by the workers and themselves. They can observe and experience shortfalls of these programs, such as boredom and/or frustration among the workers. Lee Schore explains that "they can be on the lookout to make sure that the courses are relevant and to catch any problems that might develop for the workers."

Time outside the courses can be spent talking with the workers to get their feedback on the classes and to determine if any problems may be developing for them. Learning advocates realize that their fellow workers



may be more comfortable talking about potential problems when not surrounded by their co-students and teachers. It's also the time to contact workers who may have missed their classes. Learning advocates may find that there are other problems that are keeping the workers from completing their training or studies. Certain problems, such as child-care and transportation difficulties, may be solvable with the learning advocate's assistance.

### Program Development

*"Learning advocates aren't spies, but they are a source of feedback about what is going right, and what is going wrong, in the program."*

Learning advocates can identify problems before they become crises and can contribute to the development of curriculums because of their unique position in the program. Teachers and training staff should welcome their input when making important decisions about the content and teaching styles of their programs. This exchange of ideas and information helps the teachers and training staff better understand any special needs and characteristics of the workers as well as provides an opportunity to gain the learning advocates' confidence and support.

Capable teachers and training staff should welcome

constructive criticisms from the learning advocates. Learning advocates must also be willing to listen to the concerns of the professionals and to become knowledgeable of the goals, objectives, and standards that these service providers value and/or must adhere to because of their affiliation with accredited institutions.

"Creating a program that makes workers feel cared about and valued makes that program more effective. It is a way of communicating to workers a belief in their basic ability to succeed. For people who have some questions about whether they have the necessary skills or abilities, that support can mean the difference between their successes or failures."

Learning advocates can truly help us to understand the training and educational needs of the workers. Together, we can work cooperatively with the learning advocates and workers to build a work force which is highly skilled, knowledgeable, and financially secure among their global competitors.

## passage

*"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"*

**Editors:** Bernadette Mangie, Director, Education and Support Programs; John S. Goberish, Communications

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# Anger, Confusion, and Fear: Learning Advocates Provide Insight and Direction

by Bernadette Mangie

What do workers feel like when they lose their jobs? They feel terrible. They can't believe that they will not be going to work at the same place, at the same time each day. The first day their regular routines have been changed, their hearts and minds often race uncontrollably. They struggle to picture their surviving coworkers going about their jobs without them. They wonder if their coworkers are thinking about them, too.

When workers lose jobs they need and/or enjoy, they will most likely have extreme feelings of anger, confusion, and fear. The anger workers express after losing their jobs is uncomfortable for their families, friends, and themselves.

The anger workers feel is a normal reaction to a difficult situation. Workers often ask the question, "Why me?" They will conduct personal evaluations of their work habits, job performances, and personalities in search of explanations as to why they lost their jobs. Unemployed workers look for someone or something to blame for their job losses and oftentimes internalize their blame and lower their self esteem.

When the fears inside them become irrational, they may begin to doubt their skills, abilities, and all the personal qualities that helped them become successful workers in the past. They are truly struggling to find ways to feel

good about themselves again. Learning advocates can validate the workers' anger and minimize the workers' fear and confusion.

*Here are techniques learning advocates have used to help unemployed workers who are ready to change how they feel and how they will look for new employment. These techniques help to alleviate or minimize the anger, confusion, and fear.*

- Replace angry feelings with action steps. When you feel the anger creeping back into your mind and making your body feel tense, create some healthier distractions for yourself. Take a long walk. Read a motivational book. Call an old friend. Visit a neighbor. Repair or replace something. Daydream for a moment.
  - Combat confusion with a new routine. When you feel uncertain about where you can find another job, try out a new routine for yourself. If you find that you are sleeping in too late in the mornings, try getting up earlier. On the other hand, if you are going to bed very late, try retiring to bed sooner. If you need a short nap during your day, take one to feel better.
  - Consider brainstorming to handle fears. Brainstorming is a wonderful exercise that helps you discover just how many employment options are available to you. Browse through the yellow pages of
- your local phone book. The headings and commercial advertisements may spark new job markets. Invite your family members and friends to give you their employment suggestions. Remember that in the process of brainstorming, no idea is a bad one. After all, even the most remote suggestion (idea) may help you focus on a new direction for your job search. Be open minded and creative when thinking about where you may want to look for work.
- Make a "to-do list" for yourself. Create a list of specific steps (strategies) you can pursue to expand your employment options. Accept that your anger, confusion, and fear may have sidetracked you from looking for a new job for a short time. These three emotions are normal reactions experienced by everyone who has lost a great and/or much-needed job. Forgive yourself for the delay caused by these emotions and concentrate more on your new feelings of determination and confidence.



# STAFFinfo page Focus:

## Attracting and Retaining Learning Advocates

The following illustrations will help you recruit and retain a corps of learning advocates. Please adapt the following examples to create a Learning Advocacy Program that is right for the individuals participating in your program. Although these illustrations are for work-site programs, you will be able to use the concepts to create your own customized-marketing and recognition plan for your learning advocates.

### Sample Poster Design

#### Learning Advocates Needed

*Job Description: You have to...*

- Be Yourself.
- Like Teamwork.
- Value Education.

Volunteers are needed to complete a four-day workshop that will prepare them to become members of the career-development program team. Department supervisors have work-release forms. Register early because we can only train twelve applicants at the May 16th workshop. Breakfast and lunch refreshments compliments of the Grinding Department.

### Company or Union Newsletter Release

#### WAXON Monthly Newsletter

##### Training Update

Frank Sponsor, a ten-year employee at WAXON Products, Inc., has been named Learning Advocate Award Recipient for 1994. Frank's contributions to the career-development program were highlighted at a special luncheon at Mallory's Restaurant on December 12, 1994.

We wish to congratulate Frank and hope that he will continue his work in the learning-advocacy program.

### Outreach/Recruitment Letter

April 15, 1994

Dear Frank:

Your coworkers have selected you to represent them at the next learning-advocacy workshop on May 16, 1994, from 7 AM to 3 PM, in the Melt Shop Conference Room. They feel that you will make an excellent learning advocate for the career-development program.

The company will pay your hourly rate for the day. However, you will need to get a special time card from you department supervisor. Bring it with you to the workshop, and we will sign it at the conclusion of the training.

Please stop by our office in the Project Quality Building or call 555-1325, ext. 128, before May 12th, to let us know if you will be joining your fellow trainees. We will be happy to tell you more about the upcoming workshop and address your questions.

*WAXON Products, Inc. welcomes you to its second group of learning-advocate recruits.*

Sincerely,

*Bern*

Bernard Magginck, Labor Co-Chairman

*Francis*

Francis Collander, Management Co-Chairman

### Learning-Advocate Recognition Certificate

*WAXON Products, Inc. wishes to recognize*

**Frank Sponsor**

#### **Learning Advocate Award Recipient for 1994**

*On this 12th day of December 1994, we recognize the many efforts of Frank Sponsor who has unselfishly devoted numerous volunteer hours to help his fellow workers explore and reach their career-development goals.*

*Bernard Magginck, Labor Co-Chairman*

*Francis Collander, Management Co-Chairman*

## Learning Advocates Discuss Barriers To Learning

Learning advocates who attend Lee Schore's training sessions discuss the more common barriers workers face when entering training programs. The learning advocates generally disclose the personal barriers they share with the workers and discover how they can help others, and themselves, minimize or eliminate those barriers. *To begin these discussions, Lee Schore tells them that...*

- Learning is a natural process, and it is something we do all of the time. No one survives in the workplace without learning a wide range of personal and professional skills. She tells them that one of the most common misconceptions is that "learning" is something that happens only in a school or in a classroom.
- Not all people learn in the same way, and not all people have the same interests and skills. Lee comments on how most formal training and educational programs reward only certain skills and learning styles. She has them discuss how many workers who do not learn well in these established and non-flexible situations will feel dumb.
- Many adult learners have internalized the negative experiences they had as young people in school. Others had, or have, external barriers rooted in family, health, and work problems which made, or make, learning more difficult. The

learning advocates will realize that workers will be less likely to enter training programs whenever their past or current problems have not been addressed. They talk about the workers' self-esteem, self-blame, and fear of failure.

- Instructors and training staff need to emit confidence in the workers' ability to learn. Lee tells the learning advocates how caring professionals will work hard to help their students feel successful. These professionals will jointly establish individualized learning goals with their students and avoid statements of doubt and lowered expectations. The learning advocates will begin to understand the qualities and practices which can be used to describe exceptional teachers.
- Education involves the constant testing of old knowledge and old ways of doing things against new knowledge and new ways of doing things. This fact will create mixed feelings about education in some workers. Many workers are comfortable with the way they work. In fact, they have made valuable contributions to their employers, their families, and their communities using their present knowledge and skills. Their self-worth is validated through these contributions. The learning advocates explore how the workers must feel whenever they are faced with having to change the way they work.

- Fear of change is very normal. The learning advocates are asked to relate how they react to changes in their work and personal lives. Once again, these self-disclosures help them understand how their fellow workers feel when faced with changes in technology and/or changes in work styles and systems. In a real sense, the advocates see that change often demands that workers must create a new identity for themselves. This "new identity", the learning advocates realize, may be seen as a threat to the workers' existing and comfortable identity and to their current relationships with their fellow workers.

Lee Schore's final words on removing barriers surely gives the learning advocates something more to talk and think about. She tells them, at the simplest level, these barriers can be overcome if they practice giving their fellow workers support and encouragement. Part of the giving is telling these fine workers that they have been active learners all of their lives and very productive people.

## Expectations: What Learning Advocates Will Discover

If you are planning to work with learning advocates, it's a good idea to discuss what attitudes and behaviors they may encounter when working to recruit, retain, and support their fellow workers in training programs. Here's a summary of expectations which Lee Schore shares with her learning-advocate recruits.

*Learning advocates can expect that some people will...*

- **Be very motivated** and get retraining and move on to a new job or a new career. These people are generally eager to get all of the training and education they can through active and displaced-worker programs. They may be very focused toward a specific goal.
- **See training** as a welcomed opportunity to make changes in their lives and to do something new. These people may want to start their own businesses or perhaps want to start an unchartered course which can lead to unlimited career possibilities. They value the journey toward some nebulous goal.
- **Feel confused** and not be able to make any kind of decision about what they want to do, can do or should do. These people may be more difficult to work with because they are unsure of just what kind of help they need or want.
- **Be very angry and scared.** These people may express or repress their anger and anxieties. Some may direct their anger and insecurities at their employers, fellow employees, or even the government.
- **Take great interest** in the training but never follow through with their plans. These people often sign up for classes and training programs but never show up or quit their programs abruptly. They require special care because their behavior may indicate that there are other problems complicating their willingness to follow through with their career plans.

In conclusion Lee states, "You can expect a little bit of everything. That's what makes the learning advocate's job so challenging, and when you find yourself coping with some of the really difficult situations, that's when the job is really rewarding."

### **Counseling Issues**

Advocates are involved in the program to help people get what they need in order to get through the retraining or re-employment process. Some of the situations they encounter as advocates may require the participation of counseling specialists. *What should the advocates do in these situations?*

A. **Admit their limitations.** Explain that there are other support persons in the community who are better prepared to help them with their problem(s).

B. **Get these individuals' permission** to seek further assistance. Offer to talk, on their behalf, with the professionals or to make direct referrals. In highly sensitive situations, written permission slips should be used.

C. **State and re-state** a commitment to confidentiality. Individuals who reveal specific counseling needs must never worry about their problem(s) being discussed without their approval.

The option to disclose information always rests with the individuals who need help. Advocates should not blame themselves if these individuals do not always respond favorably to involving other professionals in the counseling process; instead, they should remain firm about their limitations and about their willingness to be involved if these individuals change their minds.

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## In This Issue...

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- > U.S. Employment Growth Projections (Page Two)
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*The activity which is the subject of this publication was supported in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education. However, the opinions expressed herein do not necessarily reflect the position or policy of the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education, and no official endorsement by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or the U.S. Department of Education should be inferred.*

## The Changing Workplace: Trends and Statistics

### Hiring Teams

In the past, job seekers could expect to be interviewed and hired by a director of personnel, a human-resource supervisor, a manager, or even the big boss. Today, for many companies, this approach has been changed and expanded.

Now job candidates can often expect to meet not only with a person in a supervisory position but also with employees who are team members in the workplace.

Depending on the company, these team members often participate in reviewing your resume, cover letter, and references; participate in the interviewing process (individually and/or as a group); and help decide if you are the right person for the job.

*Why are these team members becoming involved in the hiring process?*

- The skills and abilities of a new hire will impact the effectiveness of the team.



- The team needs to feel confident in a new employee's skills, abilities, personality traits, and willingness to adapt to the established work methods and to the various changes that occur in the workplace.

- Employers are beginning to realize that the current employees or team members know their jobs better than anyone and can greatly improve the quality of the work force.
- Employers see the benefits of giving current employees added responsibilities and more opportunity to participate in the decision-making process.

### The Service Sector

The service sector employed the largest portion of the state's private work force at 33.8 percent, with an average annual payroll per employee of \$21,402, in 1991 according to 1991 County Business Patterns. (Cont.)

### Have a Back-Up Plan.

As we all know, today's job market is extremely unpredictable and is constantly going through many changes and adaptations. However, despite this fact, most people tend to hope for the best and expect that their current job will exist until they are ready to retire.



associates, and former coworkers that work in your particular field or in a field that interests you. Their knowledge of your abilities and their association with you can be of great assistance if you find yourself seeking employment in the near future.

- **Know** where to market yourself. Know trends and be prepared to relocate—if necessary.
- **Have** an updated copy of your resume. Check your resume every six months and make certain that all of your skills and responsibilities are current. Also, have a solid idea of what key individuals should be included on your reference list. (Continued)

Understanding the realities of the workplace, employees should make a conscious effort not to fall into this comfortable trap.

Regardless of how secure and comfortable you may feel in your current job, be sure to develop a back-up plan—just in case you experience an unexpected loss of employment.

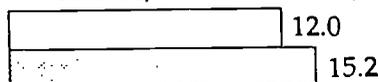
To establish a solid back-up plan, you should:

- **Upgrade** your education on a regular basis. This includes staying current with changes in your field (e.g., seminars and newsletters) and attending classes to brush-up/update your skills.
- **Maintain** contact with acquaintances, business

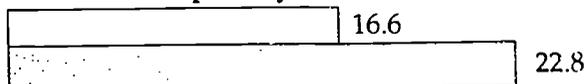
## U.S. Employment Growth Projections

The United States Bureau of Labor Statistics recently analyzed the 1992 labor force of 127 million people and projected what most likely will be happening from now until 2005, when there will be 150 million workers. Where most job growth is expected between 1992 and 2005, in millions of jobs:

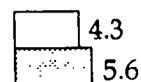
### Executives, Administrative, and Managerial



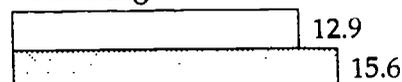
### Professional Specialty



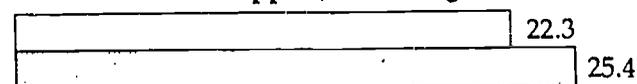
### Technicians and Related Support



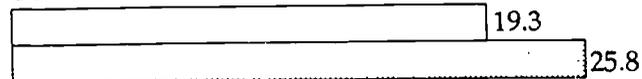
### Marketing and Sales



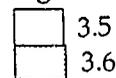
### Administrative Support, Including Clerical



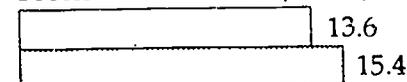
### Service



### Agricultural, Forestry, and Fishing



### Precision Production, Craft, and Repair



### Operators, Fabricators, and Laborers



Key  1992  2005

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

## The Changing Workplace: Trends and Statistics...Continued from Page Two

### State Population Grows

According to figures recently released by the U.S. Census Bureau, the total population of Pennsylvania exceeded 12 million people in 1993. The state's population as of July, 1993, was estimated at 12,048,000 persons. Pennsylvania gained approximately 166,000 people since the April 1, 1990 Census, a population increase of about 1.4 percent.

### Career Changes

According to government data, the average American worker is expected to change careers at least three times during his or her lifetime. Current high school and college graduates have been told to expect to hold

at least 10 or more jobs in their working careers.

A person's occupation and the amount of education he/she receives in a lifetime affect this change. The Bureau of Labor Statistics' research reveals that, on average, college graduates will stay in a particular occupation for about eight years. Individuals without a high school degree stay in one occupation for approximately five years.

### During The Interview

Did you know that experts in the field of career-development and job placement suggest that job seekers should spend 60 percent to 80 percent of the time listening to the potential

employer during the interview, and 20 percent to 40 percent of the time providing well thought-out, yet thorough answers? Each answer should take from 30 seconds to two minutes to complete.

### High-Skill Jobs Increase

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) reports that of the 2.5 million new jobs created from December 1992 to December 1993, 1.2 million were in management and the professional occupations. Also, the BLS reported that low-skill jobs are growing very slowly, if at all. Individuals who obtain higher educational training will be more likely to succeed in tomorrow's workplace. □

## Replacement Needs of Employers

According to the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*, most jobs through the year 2005 will become available as a result of replacement needs. With the need for employers to find replacements, even occupations with little or no employment growth or slower than average employment growth may still offer many job openings.

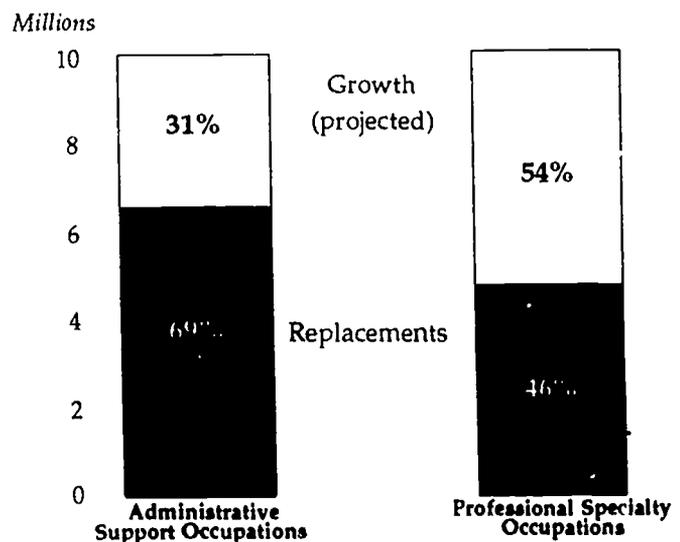
Replacement openings occur as people leave occupations. Some transfer to other occupations as a step up the ladder or to change careers. Others stop working in order to return to school, to assume household responsibilities, or to retire.

Occupations with the most replacement needs vary. Occupations with the most replacement openings generally are large, with low pay and status, low training requirements, and a high proportion of young and part-time workers.

The occupations with relatively few replacement openings, on the other hand, are those with high pay and status, lengthy training requirements, and a high proportion of prime working age, full-time workers. Workers in these occupations generally have spent several years acquiring education or training that often is not applicable to other occupations. □

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics

*Job opportunities arise from both occupational replacement needs and occupational growth.*



# STUDENTaccesspage

## Focus: Using Brainstorming Techniques

Brainstorming is a technique that is used to generate ideas. It is a creative tool that can be used for many different functions and needs (in the workplace, classroom, or personal activities). For example, brainstorming can be used by one person or by a group of people for:

- **Preparing** written materials such as articles, essays, reports, proposals, etc.
- **Developing** concepts, content, and examples for public-speaking engagements.
- **Generating** new ideas to solve problems in the workplace (e.g., increase productivity, improve customer relations, and upgrade quality).
- **Designing** new services or products.

Whether you are employed, unemployed, or attending school, brainstorming techniques can help you develop new ideas on a regular basis and reduce the mental blocks that are common when individuals are required to organize information and present that information (written or verbal communication). This is a skill that can be of use to you throughout your entire life.

The dictionary defines brainstorming as a conference technique of solving problems, developing ideas, etc., by unrestrained discussion. Solving problems, developing ideas, and unrestrained (free, no restrictions, open, etc.) discussions are the essential ingredients of brainstorming.

### Let's take a look at how this technique works:

Imagine that you have to complete a two-page article for class on the topic of budgeting your income. Instead of just beginning to write the article, try brainstorming the ideas and themes that may be included in the article.

1. **Write** the main topic or subject of your article--budgeting your income--on a sheet of paper at the top of the page.
2. **Use** your imagination to explore the subject and write down all ideas and thoughts you may have on this subject. Don't limit yourself. In this stage, no idea is a bad idea. The creative process works better when it is allowed to roam free. If an idea

doesn't fit, it can be eliminated later. (Don't be afraid to use off-the-wall ideas/humor in this creative stage.)

3. **Look** at the information that you are listing. Begin to notice what subtopics (points) support your main topic or idea and what examples support your subtopics. In this stage, you are beginning to connect related ideas for the article. For example, the focus of your main topic could be how to budget your income for college; the subtopics that support this main idea might include total expenses, total income, and financial assistance; and examples might include housing, transportation, tuition, supplies, loans, and grants.

\* Make sure that your main topic is focused. Concentrate on one aspect of your main topic. Budgeting your income for college is a more focused main topic than budgeting your income. Try not to cover too many topics when preparing a written assignment or presentation. (See the example on this page.)

4. **Examine** the ideas/thoughts that you have written. Find the most important material that supports your main topic and that fits logically with the other subtopics and examples you have chosen. Begin to disregard information that does not relate to the main topic. (At this point you may want to put your work aside and examine it when you have a fresh perspective. Also, it could be beneficial to get opinions and ideas from others to generate new ideas and to discuss content.)

5. **Use** an outline to assemble your ideas and organize related topics. Now you are ready to structure and further develop your ideas.

*Next month's STUDENTaccesspage will focus on using outlines when preparing for written assignments and public presentations. □*

<i>Sample Worksheet - Brainstorming</i>	
<i>Main Topic: Budgeting Your Income</i>	
Housing	Dependents
Utilities	Current Job
Clothing	Loans/Debts
College Education	Grants and Scholarships
Transportation	Employment
Health/Life Insurance	Educational Trends
Recreation	Savings
Entertainment	Working Budget Total Earnings
Allowance	Travel Expenses
Supplies	
Children	

# The Life 101 Series: Do It!

## A Guide To Living Your Dreams

Everyone has a dream. The dream could be a professional/career-oriented goal, a family-related aspiration, or a personal desire. One's dreams could include being an actor, completing college, seeing the completion of a community park, becoming a mechanic, or even living a healthier life.

Whether your dreams are big or small, they are your heart's desire. "The Life 101 Series: Do It!" is a creative and enjoyable resource that helps you examine these desires. Most importantly, this book is a valuable resource for helping you eliminate the barriers to success and focus on taking the steps needed to make your dreams come true.

The authors, John-Roger and Peter McWilliams, realize that one of the big secrets to achieving success is to find something that you truly love to do. It is an activity that enables you to get out of bed early each morning with excitement. It is an activity that motivates you and enables you to work hours into the evening.

At the same time, the authors realize that most people are not living their dreams. They have forgotten their dreams, created a



long list of reasons why their dreams could not possibly be fulfilled, or established a comfort zone (things we are comfortable/familiar with) and are afraid to take a risk at being uncomfortable/challenged and to go beyond this barrier.

For example, the authors state, "When we feel uncomfortable enough long enough, we tend to feel discouraged, and we return to thoughts, feelings, and actions that are more familiar, more practiced, more predictable—more comfortable. The irony is that the feelings we have been taught to label 'uncomfortable' are, in fact, among the very tools necessary to fulfill our dreams."

While the book provides an entertaining and organized approach to reaching your ultimate goals, the book requires a great deal of the

reader. The reader must be able to set goals, take risks (expanding the comfort zone), turn negative energy into positive results, and take the action steps necessary to succeed. As the authors stress, "Make no mistake about it: reading this book will not change your life, just as reading a guidebook to France will not show you France. It may give you a sense of France, perhaps, but France is France and can only be experienced through action."

"The Life 101 Series: Do It" consists of six main chapters which are:

- Part One - Why We're Not Living Our Dreams
- Part Two - Built For Success
- Part Three - Discovering and Choosing Our Dreams
- Part Four - Becoming Passionate About Your Dream
- Part Five - Doing It
- Part Six - Living Your Dreams

If you are exploring educational and employment opportunities, consider using "The Life 101 Series: Do It" as a resource for discovering your dreams, selecting the goals you want to accomplish, and achieving those dreams.

All "Life 101 Series" books are published by Prelude Press, Inc., 8159 Santa Monica Boulevard, Los Angeles, CA 90046 and can be found at your local bookstore or library. □

### Motivational Quotes

"The real secret of success is enthusiasm." - Walter Chrysler

"Many of life's failures are people who did not realize how close they were to success when they gave up." - Thomas Edison

"They always say that time changes things, but you actually have to change them yourself." - Andy Warhol

"My philosophy is that not only are you responsible for your life, but doing the best at this moment puts you in the best place for the next moment." - Oprah Winfrey

"Eighty percent of success is showing up." - Woody Allen

(Continued on page 8)

# 1993-1994 PASSAGE Survey Results

In an effort to improve the quality of the PASSAGE newsletter and to better understand the needs of the readership, the PASSAGE staff prepared a Reader's Survey which was published in the January 1994 issue. At this time, we would like to share some of the results of the survey.



- Exploring nontraditional jobs.
- Offering career-related information to help students.
- Featuring up-to-date training and employment trends.
- Using articles as classroom reading and discussion materials.
- Helping individuals enter and re-enter the work force.
- Providing information for in-house and organizational newsletters/publications.

*PASSAGE has a circulation of 2800 in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and is being used by:*

- Adult-Basic Education Instructors
- Unemployed and Underemployed Adults in Transition
- Vocational Instructors
- Reading Specialists
- Program Directors
- Volunteer Tutors
- Career/Placement Counselors
- Labor-Management Representatives
- Job Trainers/Developers
- Social Workers
- Librarians

- Utilizing material for personal/staff development.
- Understanding classroom skills that are used in the workplace.
- Providing job-search strategies and research materials.

*Comments suggested to enhance the newsletter:*

- Offer more articles and resources that can benefit lower ABE students.
- Provide more information in the area of refugee employment.
- Make additional copies available to ABE/GED students.
- Highlight more topics that can assist volunteer tutors.

*Responses to how PASSAGE was assisting the readership include:*

- Providing employability skills and highlighting qualities employers seek in new hires.

The PASSAGE newsletter staff would like to thank the readership for their support and valuable input. □

## Reducing Nervousness Before An Interview



*Here are some positive steps you can take to reduce your anxiety before an interview:*

- Practice your interview questions the night before the interview with a friend or relative. This will increase your confidence, and you will be better prepared.
- Arrive at the interview 10 minutes early. Give yourself enough time. Don't rush; it only increases your anxiety.
- Visualize yourself at the interview and picture yourself answering the questions with confidence. Imagine success; eliminate the idea of failure.
- Get plenty of rest and take a few deep breaths when you feel nervous □

# Suggestions For Those Considering College...

## Nontraditional Students: SAT and ACT Scores

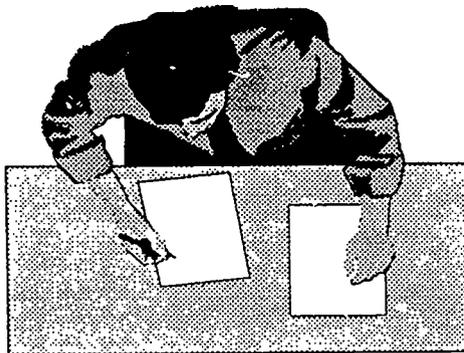
In most cases, nontraditional students (older adult students--approximately 25 years of age and up) are not required to complete the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) and American College Test (ACT) which are traditionally given to high-school seniors. With proof that you have received your high school/GED diploma, most colleges conduct a free academic assessment instead of using the SAT or ACT.

## Registering for Classes

If you have decided to attend college, be sure to register as early as possible. Try to register at least three months in advance. Keep in mind that records such as your high school/GED diploma have to be obtained to prove that you graduated and that you may have to take several tests and examinations to assess your skills in certain academic areas (grammar, spelling, vocabulary, and math).

These steps or requirements take time. Registering early will help you start on time and ensure that you will be admitted without delay or complications.

Find out about your school's payment plans, be prepared to fill out information forms that are required by the school, and have list of classes that you would like to attend. (Tip: Have a backup list of classes if selections from your first list are not available. At most schools, upper classmen get to register first.)



Know your Social Security number. At colleges, social security numbers are used to identify students. This identification number is used when you are registering, choosing classes, attending campus activities, and even dining at the cafeteria. Commit this number to memory.

## Credit and Noncredit Courses: Know the Difference

Colleges offer credit and noncredit courses for individuals wanting to improve their education. A credit course enables you to work toward a degree or a certificate.

Examples include general studies, vocational training, arts/humanities, sciences, and social sciences. A noncredit course does not count toward a college degree or certificate.

Many people take noncredit courses for personal enlightenment or self development. Some examples of noncredit courses may include auto repair, flower arrangement, learning a foreign language, fitness activities, and crafts/hobbies.

If you are interested in attending college, be sure you

can tell the difference between the two.

## Transferring Credits

Some people start their higher education experience at a cost-effective local community college to see if college is the right choice for them. Also, individuals who feel they need to test their abilities because of past performance choose a community college.

Community colleges are interested in your present performance, not your past. Also, after an individual receives 30 or more credit hours from a community college, he/she has the option of transferring to a four-year college. However, before you choose this approach, make certain that your credits from the community college will transfer to the four-year college that you will be attending.

*Continued on page 8*

## passage

*"Your Workplace and Job-Skills  
Information Newsletter"*

Editors: Bernadette Mangie,  
Director, Education and Support  
Programs; John S. Goberish,  
Communications

BCALMC Consultants: Richard  
Carland, Workforce Education  
Specialist; Beverly  
Covatch-Dicken, Literacy  
Support Specialist; Alex Garcia,  
Executive Director; Alice Green,  
Technical Advisor; and Greg  
Hill, EAPC Coordinator, and Lee  
Katroppa, GED Instructor.

For more information, call  
1-800-345-5443 or write to:  
PASSAGE, BCALMC, 400 Ninth  
Street, Suite A, Conway, PA 15027.

## Suggestions For Those Considering College...Continued

### Academic Advisor: The Most Important Contact

When attending college, you will need to meet with your academic advisor at least once a semester. This advisor helps you develop your class schedule, understand the requirements for your major or emphasis (required courses and skills), become aware of eligibility requirements for certain programs, and meet your educational/graduation goals.

If your advisor is not helpful and does not keep you on track for graduation, request a new advisor. Remember, this is your education; you deserve quality assistance. (Tip: Ask students who are preparing to graduate who the best advisors are at your particular college.)

### Student-Counseling Center

In addition to your academic advisor, most colleges have a student-counseling center. This center is available to students who are confused about their career goals and need assistance/resources. Resources

such as books, career guides, and cassette/video tapes are available to students. Also, counselors are available to meet with students who may have personal issues or problems with instructors or college staff. Know where your student counseling center is located and use it to your advantage.

### Network with Students

Get to know the students you meet in class, at the library, at the campus center/union building, and at various activities. Find out if certain classes and instructors were beneficial to the students you meet. Find out what to expect from certain classes and how to prepare for tests. Set up study groups with students who are striving toward the same goals.

Working together helps everyone involved in the learning process and decreases much of the anxiety that is involved with attending college.

### Nontraditional Students

Many adults feel awkward attending college because of their age. They believe that they are too old and will not fit in this environment. The truth is that nontraditional students are often better prepared to attend college because of their life experiences. In addition, most nontraditional students are usually more focused and have a better understanding of the importance of receiving an education. Instructors and students welcome nontraditional students. □

### Motivational Quotes Continued

"There is no security on this earth, there is only opportunity."  
- General Douglas MacArthur

"The great thing in this world is not so much where we are, but in what direction we are moving." - Oliver Wendell Holmes

"Success is not the result of spontaneous combustion. You must set yourself on fire." - Reggie Leach □

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## *PASSAGE Special Issue*

### **Focus: Summer Employment**

Many motivated job seekers take advantage of the summer months to create or secure employment. This special issue of *PASSAGE* focuses on the many employment/educational opportunities that are available throughout the summer months and on how to take advantage of these opportunities. In addition, this issue looks at the skills and expectations needed in a variety of jobs that are in demand during the summer months, provides suggestions on how to start your summertime-job search, and lists services that are available to provide assistance.

While a majority of the jobs obtained during this time of the year are temporary, job seekers can use this experience to their advantage. For example, this experience can be used to:

- Learn new skills that can improve your resume, transfer to other occupations, or provide the knowledge needed to eventually start a business.
- Grow and develop professionally.
- Network with employers and individuals who can assist you with acquiring job leads.
- Provide income for your family and educational/training efforts.
- Improve opportunities for full-time employment through work efforts and contacts.
- Sample a variety of employment opportunities when considering career options. □

### **See You In September!**

The *PASSAGE* staff would like to thank the readership for their support during the 1993-1994 project year. This issue marks the completion of our fifth year in publication.

The next issue of *PASSAGE* will be available in September 1994. *PASSAGE*, a 353 Special Project, is funded in part by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and is published ten times a year (September through June). In July and August, the staff will be developing ideas for the new project year, evaluating past performances, and networking with the readers.

If you have any ideas or suggestions for the new project year, call us toll free at 1-800-345-5443 or write to *PASSAGE*, 400 Ninth Street, Suite A, Conway, Pennsylvania 15027. Have a great summer! □

## Employment and Educational Assistance Available from JTPA

The Pennsylvania Job Training and Partnership Act (JTPA) offers employment and educational assistance to unemployed adults and special services to youths who are 14 to 21 years of age. The free training provided by JTPA helps qualified individuals obtain job-related skills and find employment.

If you are from a low income family, handicapped, or laid off from a job, you may be eligible to receive services through JTPA.

There are currently 28 locations throughout the Commonwealth where JTPA services are available. *While services vary in different areas of the State, most JTPA offices provide:*

- **Training** to upgrade basic skills or to learn new skills.
- **Assistance** in planning career goals.
- **Help** in finding and maintaining employment (resume writing, job-search strategies, and interviewing skills).
- **Employment** through work experience or on-the-job training.
- **Referral** to other agencies for assistance.

In the area of summer employment, economically-eligible youths (14 to 21 years of age) can work in summer programs in their local communities. Most summer programs assist local municipalities with construction/maintenance work such as painting, lawn-care, and building/repair. Also, academic-enrichment programs are available to youths.

*For more information about services provided by JTPA and to locate the office nearest to you, call Pennsylvania JTPA Hotline toll free at 1-800-345-2555. □*

## "Summer Jobs: 20,000 Opportunities For A Fun, Profitable Summer"

Employers place a great deal of value on both educational and work experience. Summer jobs can give students and job seekers of all ages useful and transferable job skills. **Summer Jobs** is a catalog of work possibilities for anyone looking for summer employment. This publication lists detailed, up-to-date information on approximately 15,000 jobs across the country. **Summer Jobs** is designed to be used in many different ways. Job seekers can locate employment information by using the publications:

**State-By-State Listings** - Employers are listed alphabetically by state.

**National Section** - Employers with locations in more than one state are listed here.

**Category Index** - Lists jobs according to the kinds of services they provide (e.g., industry, camps, government, hotels, and parks).

**Employer Index** - Once you know the name of the employer, this lists a description of that employer's jobs.

**Job Titles Index** - Highlights what types of jobs are most readily available and facilities that offer them.

**General Information** - Provides information about the jobs each employer provides, location, focus, profile of the average employee, when openings are available, salaries, contacts, and how to apply.

*Summer Jobs also has suggestions for job seekers who are about to begin their quest for summer employment. For example...*

- **Plan** an organized and targeted job-search as soon as possible. Don't worry about the competition.
- **Have** a resume that communicates your strong points such as experience, education, background, and personal skills. If you have no actual job experience, look at any school, community, church, and extra-curricular activities you have in your background. Tie these experiences to the job you are targeting.
- **Consider** expenses, future career goals, relocation possibilities, your skills, interests, working conditions, and transportation.
- **Understand** that employers who hire summer workers in many cases do not require direct work experience. They are more interested in your level of motivation and interest and willingness to learn.

*For More Information: Summer Jobs: 20,000 Opportunities for a Fun, Profitable Summer, Peterson's Guides, Princeton, New Jersey is available at a local bookstore and the Western Pennsylvania Adult Literacy Resource Center. □*

### Technology Summer Institute Announced

Technology! Technology! Technology! is the name of the institute being sponsored by the Central Intermediate Unit Development Center for Adults on August 2-5, 1994, at Lock Haven University.

Designed to provide adult education teachers, administrators, counselors, clerical support personnel, tutors, and volunteers with a wide variety of technological training opportunities, the institute will offer workshops, hands-on activities, seminars, and classes geared to varying levels of practitioner expertise. Presenters will address the wide range of technological issues now confronting adult educators both in the classroom and business office.

*For more information, call the Central Intermediate Unit Development Center for Adults at (717) 893-4038. □*

This month's STUDENTaccesspage is a continuation of the May 1994 issue which focused on using brainstorming techniques. After completion of the brainstorming process, the next step in organizing your presentation is to select and fine tune your best ideas by preparing an outline. This article takes a look at the importance of an outline when developing ideas and at how to prepare an outline.



marketing your job skills. Depending on your written assignment or presentation, you should try to include only three subtopics in your outline. (Don't give the reader/listener too much information. Provide details and stay focused.)

Preparing an outline is the process of taking the rough ideas/concepts that are formed in a creative brainstorming session and developing an order or organized structure for presenting information (written or verbal communication).

The outline serves as a framework or as a road map to guide you when you are preparing written materials (report, article, budget, proposal, etc.) or a public presentation (speech or comments at a meeting).

*When you are selecting the most appropriate ideas for your outline, you will need to work your way through the following important steps:*

- Define your main topic. This should be one idea, and it should be highly focused. For example, successful strategies for obtaining summer employment is a focused main topic that could have originated from the general topic of finding a job.
- Select ideas or subtopics that support your main idea. Examples might include defining the focus of your job search, organizing your job-search campaign, and

- **Group your related ideas together.** Once you choose the subtopics that best support the main idea, find information (facts, examples, or statistics) that relates to the appropriate subtopic and helps you meet the intended goals of the article/presentation.

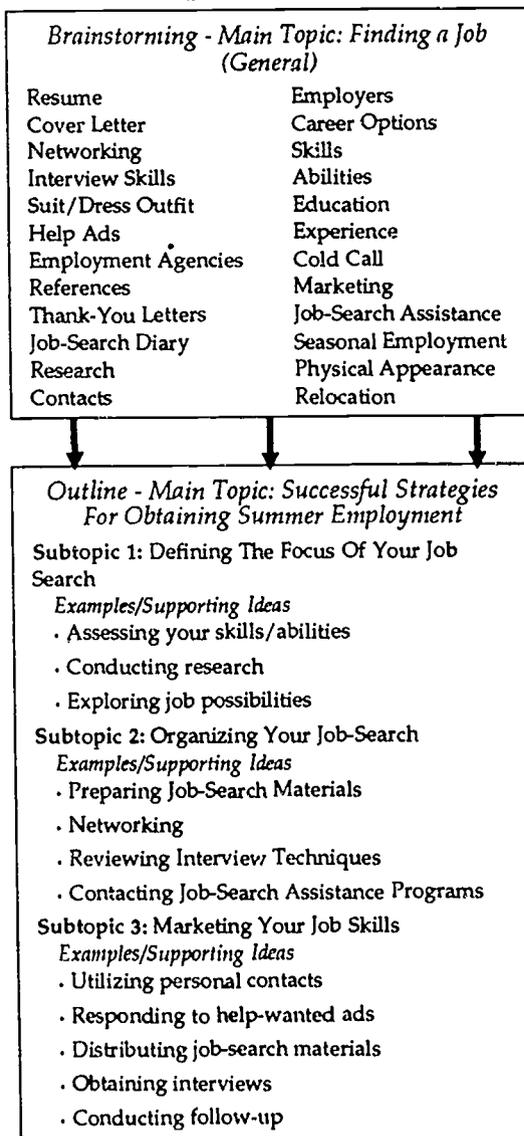
- **Expand the supporting information included in your subtopics.** Make certain that you have

included enough information to convince/persuade that reader/listener.

Including examples such as a resume, cover letter, and reference list is a more detailed approach than briefly stating job-search materials.

- **Organize your subtopics/ supporting ideas and select an order for this information.** What subtopic should be listed first? What subtopic should be listed at the end? These are questions that you need to ask yourself when preparing an outline. There are a variety of methods that you can use to establish an order--least important to most important, chronologically (order of events from earliest to most recent), or ideas that build/connect with each other. □

## Sample Worksheets



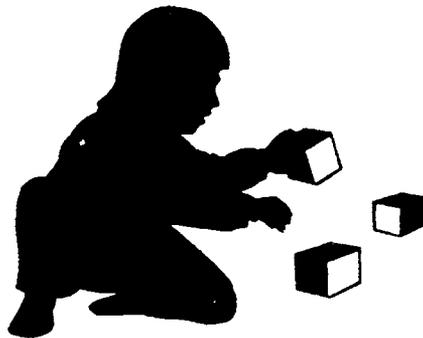
# Do You Love Caring For Children?

Caring for children is important work. If you are thinking about earning extra income during the summer as a caregiver for children, there are many things you can do to prepare yourself for the job. The first thing is to recognize that the familiar term "baby-sitter" does not properly describe the knowledge/skills you will need to effectively market yourself in this field.

Whether you wish to market yourself as a baby-sitter or as a child caregiver, learning more about human growth and development will offer you a good start.

There are many excellent textbooks and child-care magazines that will describe how children of different age groups develop physically and emotionally. A wealth of resource material is available at your local library, in pediatricians' offices, and through bookstores. *For example, did you know that...*

- **3-day old newborn babies** can detect their mothers' distinctive scents? Some children may take more time to adapt to the scents of strangers and appear more calm when returned to their mothers' care, while others may have less difficulty relaxing while in the care of different individuals.
- **8 to 9 month old babies** can get into sitting positions? This fact can help caregivers understand the importance of placing babies in areas which will encourage their new mobility but eliminate the possibility of accidents.



- **18 to 24 month old children** begin combining words into short sentences? Even among children whose parents are deaf, language skills begin to develop during this time. Caregivers can help the children develop these skills by reading to them and having conversations with them.
- **by the age of 3 years**, most children will display "deferred imitation?" Children in this age group will display, through their play activities, something they have seen earlier. Children will often imitate their moms' baking cakes or their dads' shaving rituals. Child caregivers will soon recognize that, as with the children's parents, they will also serve as role models for those children.
- **5 to 6 year old children** begin to experience fewer colds, respiratory problems, and sore throats? This is because the full maturity of the respiratory system seems to occur when children are between 5 and 6 years of age. It is not uncommon for pre-school children to have ailments which will require the dispensing of prescribed and over-the-counter

medications. Child caregivers will need to understand how those medications must be dispensed and safely housed to prevent misuse of them.

- **at around 11 years old**, a child's brain finally reaches its full adult weight and interconnectivity? Children at this stage of their development begin to understand suggested meanings of words apart from their explicit meanings and appear to understand and use logic. Children in this age group generally enjoy participating in interesting conversations, tackling special arts and craft projects, and discussing the unique challenges they begin to encounter during their pre-teen years. These pre-teen children are not always ready to care for themselves and need caregivers who are sensitive to their desire to be treated as more grown up.

The health and safety of children are primary topics of concern to parents and child caregivers alike. Parents will appreciate knowing that you have invested time in learning more about how to respond in situations that may threaten their children's health/safety.

The responsibilities in this area may include taking specialized courses and workshops that will help you to be more prepared should an emergency situation occur while you are caring for their children. There are many community-sponsored

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programs that will help you to understand the dangers that are presented to children while in their homes, at parks, and other locations where you may be accompanying the children. Many child caregivers take courses in Cardio Pulmonary Resuscitation (CPR), specializing in how to deal with dangerous situations.

Child caregivers and their client families must agree on a set of procedures to be followed during emergencies. You will need to discuss these procedures thoroughly and always insist that the parents provide you with a complete list of individuals and phone numbers that you can easily access should a difficult situation occur while you are on the job (numbers such as the client family's work, neighbors, hospital, fire, etc.). It's always an excellent idea to have this information posted near the phone and an additional copy in your possession at all times.

If you find summer work as a child caregiver interesting, you may want to explore how you can enter professional programs provided by area colleges and/or hospitals that will offer you optional credentials and career opportunities. Here is a brief summary, from the **Occupational Outlook Handbook**, of the training/educational options and responsibilities for individuals interested in child-care.

Entry-level positions generally require little or no experience. Although there are no specific requirements for these positions, employers prefer

individuals with a high school diploma. Most people accepting these positions will receive on-the-job training from their coworkers.

As stated earlier, courses in child development can be taken along with other classes in psychology, sociology, home economics, and nutrition. The **Occupational Outlook Handbook** also suggests taking classes in art, music, drama, and physical education. Volunteer or paid baby-sitting experience is always welcomed.

Formal training or certification is, of course, most desirable. If you plan to advance in the child-care field, training, education, and certification are necessary. The Child Development Associate (CDA) credential program certifies child-care workers. This program is open to individuals who are 18 years of age or older and who have child-care experience and some related classroom, workshop, and related training. A team of professionals will evaluate your progress and decide if you qualify for the CDA credential.

The job outlook in child-care is excellent. Employment of child-care workers is expected to increase faster than the average for all occupations through the year 2000.

According to the **Occupational Outlook Handbook**, this fact reflects the anticipated growth in the number of young children who will need care, together with a shift in the type of child-care arrangements parents choose for their children. Most importantly, if you are interested in this type of work,

you will have little difficulty finding a job and keeping it.

Earnings vary dramatically for the different types of child-care providers. In the late 1980s, pay for entry-level positions began around \$10,000.00 and grew for more experienced and trained workers to almost \$17,000.00. You should remember that these national income figures do not necessarily reflect the wages of child-care givers in your local area. You will need to do your own research on the income ranges available through local employers and employment situations. You may want to work for others or establish a home-based child-care business. Many individuals will work for families who can afford to pay the child-care providers excellent wages/benefits. You will have to decide which training, educational, and employment option is best for you. □

Sources: *Human Development, Fifth Edition*, by Diane Paplia and Sally Olds, Prentice Hall and the *Occupational Outlook Handbook*.

## passage

"Your Workplace and Job-Skills Information Newsletter"

Editors: Bernadette Mangie, Director, Education and Support Programs; John S. Goberish, Communications

BCALMC Consultants: Richard Carland, Workforce Education Specialist; Beverly Covatch-Dicken, Literacy Support Specialist; Alex Garcia, Executive Director; Alice Green, Technical Advisor; Greg Hill, EAPC Coordinator, and Lee Katroppa, GED Instructor.

For more information, call 1-800-345-5443 or write to: PASSAGE, BCALMC, 400 North Street, Suite A, Conway, PA 15027.

# Highlighting Summer Job Opportunities

With summer just beginning, job seekers and students are exploring the various seasonal employment opportunities that are available. This article takes a look at employment opportunities in the areas of lawn-care maintenance/groundskeeping, construction, and recreational activities.

## Lawn-Care Maintenance Workers/Groundkeepers

Lawn-care maintenance and groundskeeping are outdoor tasks that either are dreaded by many individuals or that cannot be completed without regular assistance. This need has provided self-starters in the job-market an opportunity to create part-time and full-time employment. While lawn-care service work can provide you with temporary employment for the summer months, it also has the potential to build into a career in gardening, landscaping, or groundskeeping.

*Nature Of The Work* - Some lawn-service workers, called landscape gardeners, specialize in maintaining lawns and shrubs. These workers perform a full range of duties including mowing, edging, trimming, fertilizing, and mulching. Others work for chemical-lawn services, while gardeners can work exclusively for estates, homeowners, or public gardens.

Gardeners are responsible for the overall care of the property, including feeding, watering, and pruning the flowering plants and trees, as well as maintaining the lawn. A gardener's duties vary and are determined by the needs of the property owner.



*Working Conditions* - Individuals working in some type of lawn-service activity should enjoy physical activities and working outdoors. In addition, realizing that the work is seasonal and that there is no control over the weather, individuals should expect to work long hours and should be prepared to work on weekends.

*Training And Other Requirements* - Little training is required for entry-level employment as a lawn-care worker. Employers look for applicants who have good driving records and are responsible and self-motivated individuals with good interpersonal skills. Courses in horticulture and botany are helpful for advancement. Two- and four-year programs in landscape management and ornamental horticulture are also available. Those interested in starting their own business should also take business management and accounting courses. The Professional Grounds Management Society offers in-house certification to those managers who have a combination of eight years of experience and formal education beyond high school.

*Job Outlook* - In response to the increasing demand for gardening and landscaping

services, employment in this field is expected to increase faster than the average for all occupations through the year 2000. Because wages for beginners are low and the work is physically demanding, many employers have difficulty attracting workers to fill available openings. This occupation often attracts many individuals who are only looking for summer jobs.

However, if you are interested in gaining the experience needed to eventually start your own business, the professionals give this advise: Have a neat appearance when soliciting work, keep good records, try to have backup equipment in the event of breakdowns, be dependable and considerate of your clientele, and don't be afraid to ask for referrals.

## Recreational Workers

Leisure-time activities are a necessary and important part of our lives. With the increase of these activities in the summer months, job seekers can often find employment at local institutions and at county government offices that regularly employ seasonal recreational workers.

*Nature of the Work* - Recreational workers plan, organize, and direct activities that enable people to enjoy their spare time. These programs vary depending on the institution and location in the State. County employees may repair or replace county property, guide people through county parks, or supervise various leisure activities.

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Institutional employees may monitor play and exercise activities of physically, emotionally, or psychologically impaired persons.

*Working Conditions* - The work is mostly outdoors, and it can be tiring. You should expect to work in all types of weather. It is possible that you would work on the weekend or at night.

Most jobs are in urban or suburban areas; however, there are some county facilities located in wilderness areas. You may also work at a playground, county park, campground, school, church, or local tourist attraction. Your activities can include crafts, drama, games, hiking, fishing, and other sports. There is an increasing demand for exercise and fitness programs at senior citizen centers. Therefore, the demand for exercise instructors is also growing.

*Training Requirements* - Training requirements vary with the position. Many jobs in this field do not require education beyond high school. Some jobs require specialized training such as carpentry, crafts, music, or art. Also, employees, such as lifeguards, have to be certified.

*Career Opportunities* - Seasonal work can lead to a career in recreational activities. Experienced workers are needed for positions with the state or federal government, tour groups, amusement parks, entertainment centers, vacation areas, wilderness exploration companies, hotels and resorts, camps, health spas, and senior citizen centers.

*Job Outlook* - The outlook for seasonal positions is expected to be as good as any social service job growth. Opportunities should be available to people who apply early. A person exploring this field should be outgoing, caring, and motivated. Seasonal workers can earn between \$100 and \$200 per week on top of boarding accommodations. Full-time workers receive an average of \$15,000 a year.

### Construction Jobs

The spring and summer months are productive for the construction industry. Since many of the construction trades must coordinate with each other, summer employment creates an opportunity to learn about the industry.

Often a position as a helper can be secured with little or no experience. This opportunity can then develop experience and provide insight into the job duties of each trade. The desired outcome would be an apprenticeship or on-the-job training and a chance for full-time employment.

If you possess a solid background in basic math, good physical health, alertness, and a willingness to follow directions, you may qualify to work in the construction industry. The construction industry employs millions of workers. Projections show that there will be a steady increase for the rest of this century and the beginning of the next.

Carpenters, painters, and roofers are tradesmen who are always in need. They participate not only in the

building of new structures but also in the repair of existing ones. The following job descriptions will provide some information on these trades.

**Carpenters** - Carpenters have traditionally been considered the backbone of the construction industry, accounting for approximately 25% of the skilled craftsmen. They are employed in almost every type of construction activity.

Carpentry refers to the cutting, fitting, and assembling of wood or related materials in the construction of buildings, boats, bridges, piers, and variety of other structures made of such materials.

A carpenter must be able to read blueprints, measure accurately, and mark/arrange materials. Equally important, the carpenter must be able to read and comprehend the building codes. Building codes dictate how and where a structure or addition can be built according to the law.

To get the job done, they use both power tools and hand tools such as chisels, planes, saws, and drills. Also, they use measuring devices which include levels, rules, plumb bobs, and framing squares.

Many carpenters have worked themselves into the trade by on-the-job training. Formal programs benefit a perspective carpenter by providing more technical information and refining skills. The participant should be 17 years or older and meet local requirements. It is preferred that the participant have a high school/GED diploma. The apprenticeship will last approximately three to four years. *Continued on page 8*

Continued from page 7

**Painters** - In America during the 1700's, a painted house was a symbol of prestige and wealth. It was the best houses that were protected by paint. Today, paint is the most widely used building material in the United States. Painters are members of one of the largest groups employed in the construction field. It is estimated that in the year 2000 there will be approximately 500,000 painters.

Painters are responsible for preparing surfaces, mixing the paint, and applying the paint properly. The paint brush has always been the most important tool used in this trade. A good painter must know how to select quality brushes because the trade depends on using the right tools. The painter must also know how to use rollers and spray guns for the application of paint to various surfaces.

More than any other trade, painters work their way up through the ranks learning informally while on the job. A formal apprenticeship program requires the participant to be 16 years or older. A high school

diploma or equivalency is usually required to participate in a formal program. These programs consist of approximately three years of on-the-job training and 144 hours of classroom training.

Painters should have manual dexterity and a discerning color sense. Their main objective is to provide proper protection to a surface and achieve the customers' desired results.

Since painters are among the last tradesmen on a construction job, they can observe any irregularities made by preceding tradesmen. The painter can cover over them or, in more noticeable instances, have the tradesmen repair them.

**Roofers** - Roofers perform an important function in the completion of a building. The roofers' main responsibility is to protect the structure from the elements by applying the proper materials to make the structure waterproof. (Roofers may also waterproof walls, basements, and swimming pools).

They must understand how component roofing works together to withstand the

elements. There are generally two types of roofs, flat and pitched (slanted), and there are many classifications of roof structures. Several examples are: metal decks, wood decks, precast lightweight concrete decks, poured gypsum decks, asphalt roofing, slate roofs, and cedar shingle roofing.

The roofer usually does not construct the roof itself but is responsible for installing the protective layers. The job is intricate and demanding.

Since there are so many types of roofing, roofers usually specialize in only one type. Most roofers are trained informally while working as helpers. It takes approximately five years to gather enough experience to become a roofer. There are apprenticeship programs that may be available through local union-management committees. These programs are usually three years in duration and consist of 1,400 hours of on-the-job training and 144 hours of classroom training per year. □

*Sources: Occupational Outlook Handbook and Opportunities in Building Construction Trades, Michael Sumichrast.*

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