

UNIT 3: A DESIRE TO WORK



INTRODUCTION

A Desire to Work is the third unit in the *Habits of Work* curriculum, and also the third and last unit in part two, *Learning About Work*. The lesson activities are designed to be pick-and-choose to suit the needs and interests of your students. See Appendix A in *Learning About Work* for a short summary of the full curriculum.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to:

1. Communicate effectively that they are enthused about working.
2. Describe the rewards of sustained effort.
3. Explore a company website and plan comments or questions to bring up during an interview.
4. Develop meaningful answers to challenging interview questions, including inappropriate (i.e., illegal) ones that are sometimes asked during interviews.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION FOR INSTRUCTOR

What does it mean to have and to demonstrate a desire to work? It means a person is curious and enthusiastic about the tasks and challenges of a job, has a positive attitude, shows a drive to understand, and is willing to sustain effort and maintain focus. Most people demonstrate these qualities in at least one area of their lives; this unit provides practice in transferring those qualities to the world of work.

This unit also addresses two aspects of interview questions: challenging questions and illegal questions. Depending on a student's life circumstances and disability, some typical interview questions may be difficult to answer. Students will benefit from identifying those questions and developing effective responses. Students need to communicate the message, "I have problem-solved around my disability my whole life. I've done this ... and that.... Everyone can just relax."

In the Readings section below is a website with useful tips for researching a company online.

Students also need to know that there are laws regulating what employers can and cannot ask in a job interview. Employers can wander into illegal territory quite unintentionally. It's valuable



to know what to do if that happens and how to steer the interview back into legal areas without being confrontational.

Readings

Short article on interview tips for teens, includes several points about attitude and enthusiasm: www.quintcareers.com/more_teen_job_strategies.html

The creator of *Dilbert* blogs on curiosity: www.dilbert.com/blog/entry/curiosity/

Strategies for dealing with frustration: www.life-with-confidence.com/frustration.html

Illegal interview questions and possible responses: www.usatoday.com/careers/resources/interviewillegal.htm

Instructions and ideas for researching a company online: www.ehow.com/how_2005384_research-company-interview.html

UNIT PREPARATION CONSIDERATIONS

Tasks

This unit encourages students to be curious at their workplaces. Let the supervisors know ahead of time that students may be asking more questions than usual. Ask them for suggestions about who students could interview, people who fit one or more of these categories:

- have a great attitude
- moved up in the company
- work productively even when they are frustrated
- were strong job applicants

You may want to edit this list of typical interview questions, www.aie.org/Finding-a-career/job-interviews/typical-interview-questions.cfm, for use with your students.

If you do the mini mock interview activity, prep the internship supervisors for their roles.

If you do mock interviews in class, recruit adults unfamiliar to the students to be your interviewers.

If you do the timer activity, you will need kitchen timers (or similar). Check with the supervisors to make sure the timer won't be disruptive.

Prior Knowledge

You may need to preteach some of these concepts depending on the lessons and activities you select:

- body language
- legal and illegal interview questions



SUMMATIVE ASSESSMENT IDEAS

Following are ideas for a summative assessment for this unit:

1. Real-world cards. Students write one card for where they could apply their new knowledge in the real world in each of these areas: attitude, enthusiasm, curiosity, focus and effort, and interview questions (learning outcomes 1, 2, 4).
2. Mock interviews. Students answer a few typical questions and at least one illegal question (learning outcomes 1, 4).
3. Inside-outside circle. The inside circle faces the outside circle. The outside circle moves to create new pairs. Alternate questions and answers between student circles. Students ask each other questions about enthusiasm, curiosity, sustained effort, researching a company, and interview questions (learning outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4).

UNIT KICKOFF

1.  Show this 2:14-minute trailer about a fish market in Seattle with motivated employees. Use it to spark discussion about how you can tell when a person likes the work they do. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72QTABuE0O4&feature=email>
2. Listen to Marge Piercy's dramatic reading of her poem, "To Be of Use." www.margepiercy.com/sampling/To%20Be%20of%20Use%20by%20Marge%20Piercy.mp3 You can find the text of the 26-line poem at writersalmanac.publicradio.org/index.php?date=2006/09/04. After listening, try this construction spiral activity. First, ask students to reflect on their own thoughts about this poem in relation to their future careers, then have small groups share ideas. Finally, write the whole group's ideas on the board.

LESSONS

This unit is divided into the following lessons. The lessons contain choices for activities and are organized into an instructional sequence around a workplace assignment.

1. Positive attitude
2. Curiosity
3. Maintain focus and effort
4. Challenging questions
5. Illegal questions
6. Research a company



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
I. Positive attitude	Introduction – individual	  Watch this 4:10-minute video, “Attitude – It’s Your Choice,” about positive and negative attitudes: www.youtube.com/watch?v=P5aPrSDrQil&feature=related Journal. Write an entry listing about what the employee did in the different scenarios to show a positive attitude. What did he do when he encountered a potentially frustrating situation?
		 Journal. Read this short piece, “Developing Positive Attitude at Work”: www.career-success-for-newbies.com/developing-positive-attitude.html Pick one of the three tips and reflect how you use this in your life, or how you could use it.
	Introduction – classroom	Role play. Have students interview each other. Each person gets to be both interviewer and interviewee. Compare notes on the impressions each side got each time.
		Strike a pose. Bring a few volunteers up front. With the rest of the group observing body language, have volunteers strike poses: I’m bored, I’m interested, I’m curious. Ask the group to identify what communicates the attitude.
		Right way or wrong way. Discuss what goes into the attitude you radiate (posture, tone of voice, facial expressions, etc.) Watch the samples of a student presenter showing and not showing enthusiasm: techspeaking.denison.edu/Technically_Speaking/Show_Enthusiasm.html . Now, practice presenting a topic the wrong way, followed by the same topic presented the right way.
	Workplace activity	Mental notes. Notice who seems enthusiastic, bored, uninterested, energetic, or tired. What is it about them that tells you this? How do other people treat them?



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
<p><i>Positive attitude, continued</i></p>		<p> Interview someone who has a great attitude. Find out how they maintain it and how they view the world. Were they always this way?</p>
	<p>Follow-up – individual</p>	<p> Journal. Write a Frame a Choice entry: “I have a choice. I can (describe a poor attitude) or I can (describe the positive attitude).” End with “It is my choice.”</p>
		<p> Journal. Describe a positive attitude and a negative attitude you observed at work. What is one thing the person with the negative attitude could do to react differently in the future?</p>
	<p>Follow-up – classroom</p>	<p>Drama. Invite a few adults unfamiliar to the students to act as employers interviewing potential employees. Divide the class into groups of three. Students take turns acting as the job applicant; the other two are observers. Each applicant has a five-minute interview. After each interview, the observers comment on the applicant’s attitude. What was positive and what could be improved? Observers should draw on work site observations to make suggestions.</p>
<p>2. Curiosity</p>	<p>Introduction – individual</p>	<p>  Watch the 1:41-minute video, “How to Prepare for a Job Interview: Questions to Ask During a Job Interview”: www.youtube.com/watch?v=PgKXn_lrGlg</p> <p>Journal. Write down five questions you would like to ask at any interview for any job.</p> <p> Journal. Research your work site’s website and develop a couple questions (not about salary!) about a job you might like in the future, e.g., hours, job content, group size, team versus individual work. Write down the questions you developed.</p>



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
<p><i>Curiosity, continued</i></p>		<p> Journal. Read this article, “Four Reasons Why Curiosity Is Important and How to Develop It”: www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/4-reasons-why-curiosity-is-important-and-how-to-develop-it.html. Comment on two of the tips that resonate with you.</p>
	Introduction – classroom	<p>Discussion. Why is curiosity a good trait? What is needed for your curiosity to be authentic? How can you turn boredom into curiosity?</p>
		<p>Questions. Use who, what, when, where, why, and how to develop five questions to ask people about their jobs.</p>
	Workplace activity	<p> During a break or lunch time, ask some coworkers how they got started in this field. What do they like about it? What was their job progression? Ask some of the other questions you developed in class.</p>
		<p> Ask your supervisor how people advance in this company and in this field.</p>
		<p> Talk with your supervisor about a project or job you would like to do at work. Would it be possible? What needs to be in place first?</p>
		<p> Ask your supervisor the questions you developed while looking at the company website.</p>
	Follow-up – individual	<p> Journal. What was it like to ask questions? What was easy? What was more difficult? Write down some ideas for showing curiosity more often.</p>
Follow-up – classroom	<p>Construction spiral. First as a group, then in small groups, then as a class, address the following questions: What was easy about asking questions? What was hard? How did people react to being questioned? How does it</p>	



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
<i>Curiosity, continued</i>		<p>feel when you act with curiosity? Do you hold your body differently?</p> <p> Journal. Describe a lifelong learner. How can you demonstrate being a lifelong learner in your workplace? What more could you learn about this job to perform better?</p>
3. Maintain focus and effort	Introduction – individual	<p> Watch this 1:02-minute video, “Stay Focused”: www.youtube.com/watch?v=0gLIVRfCssl</p> <p>It’s a tire commercial. Listen to it two more times with your eyes closed and imagine another sequence of scenes from your life that would fit the script.</p> <p>Journal. Describe the scenes in your journal.</p> <p> Journal. Read “18 Ways to Stay Focused at Work”: www.davecheong.com/2006/08/14/18-ways-to-stay-focused-at-work/</p> <p>Which of these strategies do you see people use at your workplace or in school to stay focused? Which ones do you use?</p>
	Introduction – classroom	<p>Discussion. Read the poem, “Be the Best of Whatever You Are” by Douglas Malloch: www.great-inspirational-quotes.com/be-the-best-of-whatever-you-are.html. Focus on the third stanza, “and the task you must do is the near.” What are the rewards for doing the tasks that are near? What’s hard about them?</p> <p>Discussion. Compare a time when you wanted to work on a project to a time when you did not. How were the experiences different?</p> <p>Discussion. As a class, generate a list of realistic strategies and tools that can be used to maintain focus and effort. Discuss how you might use these tools and identify one or more each student might be interested in trying.</p>



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
<p><i>Maintain focus and effort, continued</i></p>	<p>Workplace activity</p>	<p>Timers. Set your timer to go off every 37 minutes for a few days at your workplace. Are you focused? Are you on task? Keep track on a tally sheet.</p> <p> Ask three people how they keep their focus at work.</p> <p> Ask a coworker to tell you about a time he or she had to do a job that was particularly uninteresting. How did your coworker keep focused and motivated to complete the task?</p> <p> Ask three people how they handle frustrations at work and what they do to keep focused and working.</p>
	<p>Follow-up – individual</p>	<p> Journal. Review your timer records. Were you on task the whole time? Were you working, being silly, daydreaming, or procrastinating? What could you change next time?</p> <p> Journal. Review your timer records. Did you show best effort? What could you do better next time?</p> <p> Journal. Experiment and document. Pick one new focusing or efforting strategy you've learned about. Try it for one week and make daily journal entries reporting on the results.</p>
	<p>Follow-up – classroom</p>	<p>What works? List all the different focusing or efforting strategies students have learned about. Each person picks one and tries it for a few days. Report back to each other what works. Award medals to the most useful.</p> <p>Connect to the Introduction classroom activity. Students share the new strategies they have tried. Then they expand the classroom list with the new strategies they discovered others use at work.</p>



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
4. Challenging questions	Introduction – individual	 Watch the 2:18-minute video, “Job Interview Bootcamp: Answering Interview Questions,” www.youtube.com/watch?v=jYqI0mAp2AY&NR=1 , and this 4:08-minute video, “Classic Job Interview Questions,” www.youtube.com/watch?v=Nr2bpcpNQWY&feature=related . Journal. From what you learned from the video, list some interview questions that might be challenging for you to answer. For each question, write down either one idea for answering it or something to ask your teacher about the question.
	Introduction – classroom	<p>Construction spiral. Review a list of typical interview questions. Choose two that would be challenging to answer. Join with another group and brainstorm answers to all four questions. Share the questions and answers with the whole class.</p> <p>Role play. The class describes several common situations where a young adult gets in trouble with the police, and lists possible lessons learned from each situation. Make a brief card for each situation. Volunteers take the roles of employer and job applicant. Each job applicant picks a card and explains the mess, focusing on staying positive and the lessons learned. The group adds more ideas.</p>
	Workplace activity	 Pick two questions you think are hard to answer and ask them of a couple people at work. Make mental notes about what was strong or weak about their answers.
		 Ask two people at work what interview questions they find difficult and how they answer them.



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
<p><i>Challenging questions, continued</i></p>		<p>Mini mock interview. An internship supervisor asks you three interview questions, one of which is from your personal list of hard questions. Afterward, talk with your supervisor about how to strengthen your answers.</p>
	<p>Follow-up – individual</p>	<p> Journal. Think of questions you personally would find difficult to answer and make notes about points you could bring out in an answer.</p>
		<p> Journal. Was it helpful to work on answers to questions before the actual interview? What was it like answering those questions versus other ones?</p>
	<p>Follow-up – classroom</p>	<p>Everyone in the class lists the interview questions that were hard for people at work to answer or that their supervisor asked them (drawing from the workplace activity above) See if themes emerge. What kinds of questions seem to be hard to answer? Have the students discuss the themed questions that would be most difficult for them to ask and why.</p>
<p>5. Illegal questions</p>	<p>Introduction – individual</p>	<p> There are questions that employers cannot legally ask you, yet you may be asked them anyway. Watch the 1:02-minute video, “Example Illegal Interview Questions,” www.youtube.com/watch?v=fjKJSijLv5c, to see examples of how to answer illegal questions in a polite yet firm way. Journal. What was effective about how the job applicant answered the illegal questions?</p>
	<p>Introduction – classroom</p>	<p>Activating prior knowledge. What questions are illegal for employers to ask in an interview?</p> <p>Multiple solutions. Hand out a list of illegal questions. Develop three responses to each question, then add a pro and con to each response.</p>
	<p>Workplace activity</p>	<p> Ask your internship supervisor how they decide what questions to ask a job applicant.</p>



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
<p><i>Illegal questions, continued</i></p>		<p> Ask two people at work if they have ever been asked illegal interview questions. Did they know some questions are illegal? How did they respond?</p>
	<p>Follow-up – individual</p>	<p> Journal. Pick two illegal questions you can imagine being asked, and write a journal entry about how you would respond.</p>
	<p>Follow-up – classroom</p>	<p>Dyads. Students make a deck of illegal questions and then take turns drawing cards and responding to the questions. Help each other improve your responses.</p>
<p>6. Research a company</p>	<p>Introduction – individual</p>	<p> Journal. Pick a company you might like to work for. Find the company website and look at the About Us section. List the main products and services the company offers. Make some notes about how your skills or interests could fit in.</p>
	<p>Introduction – classroom</p>	<p> Journal. Take a group tour of a company website. What can you learn that would be useful in an interview? If students did the individual activity above, have them go back to the company they researched and add additional information that might be helpful to know for an interview.</p>
	<p>Workplace activity</p>	<p> Ask your supervisor about good questions past job applicants asked.</p>
		<p> Ask your supervisor to describe some strong job applicants he or she has interviewed. What made them impressive?</p>
	<p>Follow-up – individual</p>	<p>Create a ladder for success. For each rung of the ladder identify something you will do to impress your supervisor.</p>
<p>Follow-up – classroom</p>	<p>Discussion. You have seen what you can learn about companies from their websites. How can you put that together with what you learned from interviewing your supervisors? Create a</p>	



Lessons	Instructional Sequence	Activities
Research a company, continued		list of five research questions to answer as preparation for an imaginary future interview.

CONNECTIONS TO NH CAREER DEVELOPMENT FRAMEWORK

The NH Career Development Curriculum Framework (October 2006) establishes seven curriculum standards “that define what New Hampshire students should know and be able to do relative to career development” at the end of grades four, eight, 10 and 12. Listed below are the End of Grade 10 and End of Grade 12 proficiency standards addressed in this unit, some more intensely than others. *Habits of Work* provides practice towards these standards. Student competence will depend on the activities you choose and the depth of student practice. You may need to develop individual activities in order for students to achieve competence.

End of Grade 10

- 1.1 Access information from multiple sources and information-retrieval systems.
- 1.3 Demonstrate the ability to summarize ideas and information.
- 1.5 Demonstrate the ability to effectively and logically support individual ideas.
- 1.6 Use cross-referencing while gathering information.
- 1.7 Credit sources and cite references appropriately.
- 1.8 Recognize, evaluate, and respond appropriately to persuasive forms of communication.
- 2.2 Identify the issues involved in making a decision or solving a problem.
- 2.3 Gather and use appropriate materials and resources in making individual and career decisions, including printed materials, human resources, and information accessed through technology.
- 2.4 Use logic to draw conclusions from available information.
- 2.5 Develop a plan that reflects research and builds on relevant precedents.
- 2.6 Evaluate an event or activity in terms of expressed purposes.
- 2.7 Generalize rules or principles (underlying patterns and relationships) from a set of conclusions, objective data, written text, or system’s review, and apply those rules and principles to a new situation.
- 2.8 Devise strategies for improving the performance of a system.
- 2.9 Test the effectiveness of the strategies employed.
- 3.1 Independently identify resources and tools needed to achieve learning goals.
- 3.3 Describe how skills developed in academic and vocational programs relate to career goals.
- 4.1 Demonstrate the ability to use peer and adult feedback.
- 4.2 Demonstrate an understanding of how individual characteristics relate to achieving individual, social, educational, and career goals.
- 4.3 Demonstrate the importance of responsibility, dependability, punctuality, and integrity in school, the workplace, and adult life.
- 4.4 Demonstrate the ability to take leadership roles when appropriate.



- 4.5 Apply decision-making skills to career planning and career transitions.
- 5.1 Demonstrate confidence and positive self-concept in beginning work-related experiences, practice or actual.
- 5.3 Develop the ability to use constructive criticism.
- 6.1 Locate, evaluate, and interpret career information.
- 6.2 Identify and explain the rights and responsibilities of employers and employees.
- 6.4 Demonstrate the use of a range of resources to gather information about careers.
- 6.5 Identify individuals in selected occupations as possible information sources, role models, or mentors.
- 6.6 Consult with and observe adult role models at work to identify elements of their work and determine the need for specific knowledge and skills.
- 6.7 Demonstrate the skills and behaviors necessary for a successful interview.
- 7.1 Evaluate the relationship between their individual interests, abilities, and skills and achieving individual, social, educational, and career goals.
- 7.2 Demonstrate a positive attitude toward work and learning.
- 7.4 Apply employability and job-readiness skills to internship, mentoring, shadowing, and/or other world-of-work-related experiences.

End of Grade 12

- 1.1 Utilize others' critiques as a resource in achieving goals.
- 1.2 Demonstrate the ability to analyze how well evidence supports a conclusion or thesis.
- 1.3 Present, explain, and defend positions, using visual aids when appropriate.
- 1.4 Demonstrate the effective use of the conventions of the English language in communication.
- 1.5 Demonstrate the ability to adjust communication style and language so that it is appropriate to the situation, topic, purpose, and audience.
- 2.1 Apply decision-making skills in a wide variety of situations.
- 2.2 Analyze the design and management of a system.
- 2.3 Develop a systemic plan and communicate the plan clearly.
- 2.4 Develop and test strategies to optimize the performance of a system.
- 2.5 Demonstrate how to analyze the interrelationships of events or ideas from several perspectives.
- 3.1 Evaluate the processes used to achieve goals and improve the qualities of resulting products.
- 3.2 Show evidence of effective time management.
- 4.1 Demonstrate behaviors that maintain physical and emotional health.
- 4.2 Demonstrate knowledge of how individuals grow and develop throughout their lives.
- 4.4 Demonstrate the ability to make decisions consistent with one's own belief system.
- 5.3 Demonstrate effective and flexible team skills as a team member or leader.
- 6.1 Use their analyses of role models to improve planning and implementation of projects.
- 6.4 Explain how the changing workplace requires lifelong learning and the upgrading of skills.
- 6.6 Explain how employment opportunities relate to education and training.

