

# Chapter 3

## Lesson 3

### Be Independent / Academic Skills and Employment

**Theme: Academic Skills/Life Skills**

#### **Lesson Objective:**

Students will explain relationship between competence and resiliency. Students will identify level of individual, basic, and transferable skills. Students will demonstrate awareness of relationship between work skills and getting and keeping a job. Students will demonstrate awareness of the connection between independence and employment. (See matrix for Arizona Academic/Adult Standards).

#### **Steps to Follow:**

**“If you think your teacher is tough, wait ‘til you get a boss.” --Bill Gates**

**“My unemployed brother-in-law gave up his job because of illness. His boss got sick of him.” --Henny Youngman**

1. Practice Chapter 2 litany. Briefly review decision-making steps. (Chapter 2)
2. Discuss quotation(s).
3. Refer to resiliency-building skills.
4. Ask: How does the ability to manage your own life promote independence and resiliency? Tell: Everyone needs personal and academic skills to get and keep a job and to manage your own life. This lesson – Skills to get and keep job. Next lesson – Academic and personal skills to manage life.

#### **Stay in school? Why it’s worth the effort.**

- Complete *School Work on the Job* S7
- Complete *Skills to Tell an Employer About* S9.
- Complete *What Do Employers Want?* S13 *Would You Go To Work Today?* S14 *Who Would You Hire?* S15 *Who Would you Fire?* S16.

### **Make a Plan**

- Have student look at *GOALS IN MY LIFETIME* in the Life Areas "Career" and "Learning."
- Student completes *Make a Plan* sheet for each goal in "Career" and "Learning" Life Areas.
- On the back of one of the worksheets, have student list at least 6 ways people overcome obstacles. List as many people as they can (either that they know personally or have heard of) who have shown they can overcome.
- Review *Career Plan* (Chapter 1, Lesson 8 S4).

### **Materials:**

*Career Plan* (Chapter 1, Lesson 8 S4)

*Make a Plan* (Chapter 1, Lesson 2 EN 1)

*School Work on the Job* S7

*Skills to Tell an Employer About* S9

*What Do Employers Want* S13

*Who Would You Hire?* S15

*Who Would you Fire?* S16

### **Evaluation:**

Rubric

### **Enrichment:**

*Would you Go To Work Today* S14?

*Characteristics of Good Workers* EN5

## SCHOOL WORK ON THE JOB

S7

**Directions:** Read the job descriptions. Circle the school subjects that each worker needs for his/her job. Be prepared to explain why you made your choices.

### #1 Carlene: Nurse-Midwife

Carlene works as a nurse-midwife. She works in a public clinic where over half the patients speak Spanish and the rest speak English. She works with women who are pregnant and gives them tests to see if they are healthy, drawing blood, taking vital signs. She also monitors the development of the baby during the pregnancy and calculates the approximate day the baby will be born. She then interprets the blood and other tests to be sure the mother and baby are doing well. She keeps very accurate records of the mother and the baby. She prescribes vitamins and a special diet for many of the patients. She works with both the mothers and the fathers to teach them about what will happen during the pregnancy and how they should prepare for the birth of their babies.

When the mother starts her labor, Carlene goes to the hospital and stays with the mother and father during the long hours of labor. Carlene often delivers the baby when it is ready to be born. While in the hospital, she consults with the nurses and doctors and knows how to use the computerized instruments in the delivery room.

Computer Technology  
Reading  
Nutrition  
Oral Communications

Social Studies/History  
Science  
Writing

Foreign Language  
Art  
Mathematics

### #2 Carlos: Social Worker Supervisor

Carlos is a supervisor of social workers at an agency for people with disabilities. His staff members help their clients get good care from doctors and nurses. They do home visits and see to it that the clients have transportation when they need to go somewhere. His staff works with people of many different backgrounds and languages. They must know about each person's background and needs. Carlos gets the funding for his program from the Federal government, so he needs to understand how the government works to keep the money coming in. He reads professional journals about caring for people with disabilities so he and his staff will know the latest information.

The budget for his program is \$500,000 a year and he needs to keep track of all the expenses of the program, like rent, office machines, payroll. He meets every week with his staff to discuss how things are going and work out any problems that come up. He also is required to write detailed reports every month to show that they are spending the money as it is supposed to be spent and that they are serving the clients well.

Computer Technology  
Reading  
Nutrition  
Oral Communications

Social Studies/History  
Science  
Writing

Foreign Language  
Art  
Mathematics

**#3 Donald: Outdoor Adventure Company Owner (page 2)**

Donald is the owner of an outdoor adventure company. He makes arrangements with hotels in his town to take their customers on day-long adventure outings, like river rafting, mountain hiking, hiking, hot air balloon rides and horseback riding. He has to figure out how many horses, bikes, backpacks and other equipment he needs for each group. He also needs to determine the cost of the vans to transport the people and how much food to prepare and take for their lunches. He rents horses, mountain bicycles, river rafts and he contracts with hot air balloon operators to take his customers up. He has to coordinate all that and keep track of all his bills on his computer. If he makes mistakes, he loses business.

He has ten people who work for him part-time to lead his trips. He needs to be good at reading the weather, so his customers do not get stranded in storms. He has also had to learn a great deal about the mountains and desert and the history of the Southwest so he can tell his customers about it when they are on their adventures. Donald wants to expand his business so he is writing a proposal to the new hotels that are being built. He designs very attractive brochures each year that he sends to all the major hotels to let them know about his business.

Computer Technology  
Reading  
Nutrition  
Oral Communications

Social Studies/History  
Science  
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## SKILLS TO TELL YOUR EMPLOYER ABOUT

S9

Identifying the skills you have and want to market to an employer.  
It's easier to answer interview questions when you know which skills to emphasize.

From the list of Individual and Transfer skills, select the ten skills you would want to tell an employer. State the skill and give a brief example of what you've done to show you have the skill.

SKILL	PROOF
Example: Honest	Handled up to \$10,000 daily
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	
6.	
7.	
8.	
9.	
10.	

Think About it:

List 7 jobs that use all or some of these skills.

## WHAT DO EMPLOYERS WANT?

S13

### Directions:

1. Read the list below. If you owned your own business, rank the characteristics in order of importance to you as an employer (1-16). Discuss your answers.

- \_\_\_\_\_ **Enthusiasm: optimism, excitement**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Initiative: seeing what needs to be done, doing it**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Willingness to learn**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Cooperation**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Dependability: can be counted on**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Ability to accept criticism**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Honesty: truthful, trustworthy**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Willingness to follow directions**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Loyalty: to stand by someone, not speak poorly of, faithful to the company**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Attitude: feelings about something**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Courtesy: polite, respectful**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Open-minded: Ability to see both sides of an issue**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Neat: clean and well organized**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Self control: able to control emotions and actions**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Sense of Humor: Seeing the positive side**
- \_\_\_\_\_ **Tact: saying the right thing at the right time, ware of time and place**

2. From the list above identify your five strongest areas and your five weakest areas.

Strengths	Weaknesses

### Think About it:

List at least 3 ways your weaknesses might hinder you on the job.

List at least 3 ways your strengths might help you on the job.

Write two paragraphs. Include in each paragraph: title, topic sentence, details and examples that support your main idea.

Strengths help

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Weaknesses hinder

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BONUS: List at least 3 things you can do to overcome your weaknesses.

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## WOULD YOU GO TO WORK TODAY?

S14

**Directions:** Read the following situations and decide if you would go to work. Write a quick “Stop and Think VGC” before you decide..

### #1

You have a four-year-old child. You have to be at work in one hour and your child just vomited on your shoe. The child has a temperature of 101 degrees. Would you go to work today?

Values

Goals

Choices/Consequences

### #2

You were in a car accident last night. You are fine but your car is totaled. Would you go to work today?

Values

Goals

Choices/Consequences

### #3

Your friend calls you and says that he has tickets to see your favorite music star. The concert is tonight when you are supposed to work. Would you go to work?

Values

Goals

Choices/Consequences



## WOULD YOU GO TO WORK TODAY? (page 2) S14

### #4

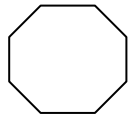
Your water pipe broke and your basement is flooding. The plumber is on the way.  
Would you go to work?

Values

Goals

Choices/Consequences

**Think About It:**



Pretend you are the employer. For each of the scenarios do a quick stop and think VGC from your point of view. What would the consequence be for an employee if he didn't come to work in each of these situations?

1.

2.

3.

4.

## Who Would You Hire?

**S15**

### The Case of the Fly-By-Night Trucking Company

The Fly-By-Night Trucking Company has a position open for a warehouse inventory clerk. The person hired for this position will supervise and assist the ten workers who load and unload the trucks. The warehouse clerk will be responsible for checking shipping and receiving receipts. Inventory of all merchandise moving in and out of the warehouse, employees' work schedules, and meeting deadlines are also part of the job. The salary is \$10.50 per hour working the night shift, 11pm-7am.

Below is information about the three people who have applied for the job. The Fly-By-Night Trucking Company wants you to decide whom they should hire.

FRED SMITH: 45, past experience includes 15 years as truck driver for a major trucking company, laid off due to company closing, previous salary \$20,000, long hair and beard. Wore a clean plaid shirt and dress jeans to the interview, rated "good" by interviewer.

SALLY JONES: 27, past experience includes five years as stock person in grocery store, stocking shelves and taking inventory of goods, reason for leaving was to relocate for husband's job, husband now disabled, two children, previous salary \$6.00 per hour. Wore dress pants and sweater to interview, rated "excellent" by interviewer

TOM ADAMS: 18, high school graduate, worked part-time in family business loading trucks, relocated to this city in need of full-time employment, single, previous salary minimum wage. Wore a suit to the interview, rated "excellent" by interviewer

WHO WOULD YOU HIRE?

WHY?

Would your decision change if: (tell your reasoning)

- a. All employees at the company were white males age 25 and older?
- b. Fred was Hispanic?
- c. The person who held the position before was a woman who left due to pregnancy?
- d. You had a son the same age as Tom?

**Team Member's Names:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Background Information:** *Due to a downturn in the economy and re-organization of the business, your company must fire 4 employees. Descriptions of all 6 employees are on the student handouts*

**Directions:**

Separate into teams and choose a recorder. As a team, decide who you would fire.

1. If attendance is the major factor, who would you fire?
2. If productivity is the major factor, who would you fire?
3. If interaction with the boss is the major factor, who would you fire?
4. If personality is the major factor, who would you fire?
5. If seniority (who worked there the longest) is the major factor, who would you fire?

**Team's Final Decision:**

List the four people you would fire. Be sure to explain why you would fire them.

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Who does your team think is the company's most valuable employee? Explain why.

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

Would the people you have just worked with in order to make these decisions be able to work together as a team in an employment situation? Explain.

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

**Employee Profiles****Reynaldo Canto**

Rey has been with the company for 15 years. He is very creative in a job that requires lots of creativity. He usually arrives a half hour early each day and often works past closing time. He sometimes takes work home with him on weekends. He is rarely absent from work. He is a friend of his supervisor's boss. He speaks up when he disagrees with someone or thinks something is wrong and lets everyone know his opinion. In the end, though, he follows his supervisor's instructions.

**Tina Knight**

Tina has been with the company for 2 years. She is always on time for work, takes exactly the time allowed for lunch, and leaves at closing time each day. She is rarely absent. Her work is precise, but she is not particularly speedy. She completes about one project per month, which is average for the department.

Tina is not tactful, however. She has lost her temper and yelled at another employee in front of customers. She caused that employee to quit.

**Jerald Smith**

Jerry is not particularly creative. He is hardly noticeable. He has been with the company about 4 years. He goes at a project step-by-step and does get the job done. He can complete about one project per month if he has to. Usually the quality of his work is just OK. Jerry is usually on time for work. He is rarely absent. He keeps to himself and never seems to disagree with anyone or anything.

**Socora Ruiz**

Socora is a hard worker. She has been with the company 3 years. Everyone knows she is a single parent with 4 children to support. She comes and goes at the regular times, and occasionally takes work home with her. Socora is friendly with the supervisor. They often eat lunch together. In fact, Socora is friendly and courteous with everyone...managers, co-workers and customers.

**Ron Milano**

Ron is very creative and a great problem-solver. He works with Socora and has been with the company one month less than Socora. Socora is always amazed at how creative Ron is and tells everyone how quickly he comes up with ideas. Ron averages four completed projects each month. (The department average is one per month.) Ron is usually about 15 minutes late for work each morning. He has chronic allergies, seems to get sick easily and often misses work. When he misses work, the other people on his team make up for his not being there.

### **Anna Cheng**

Anna has been with the company for three months. She seems to be working out fine, although it's a bit early to tell. Her first month was spent in training, the second in planning projects. Thus she has only one project near completion. Anna's attendance and punctuality are good. She seems to be getting along with the other employees who all seem to value her contributions to the team.

## CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD EMPLOYEES

EN5

**Directions:** Below are situations encountered by employees and employers. Give each student, or small group of students, a situation and let them determine the qualities/skills, good and bad, that the employee showed. Review the lists of Individual and Transfer skills. Also have them discuss the questions attached to each scenario.

### Scenario #1

The Home Improvement Center hired Steve part-time to stack lumber, make deliveries, and assist wherever needed. His duties for a particular day were not usually known ahead of time, but he was given directions each afternoon when he arrived for work. Last Tuesday he was stacking lumber. When he finished the job, early in the afternoon, his boss told him to take off early as everything seemed to be caught up. The next day Steve didn't show up for work at all. When he came in on Thursday afternoon, the boss told Steve he was fired. It seemed that on Wednesday morning the Center had made a lot of sales that needed to be delivered that afternoon. Since Steve didn't show up, the manager hired another person to make the deliveries.

- List at least 7 qualities / skills Steve needs to work on.
- Was the manager unfair to Steve? Before you decide, first do a Stop and Think VGC as the boss.
- Next do a Stop and Think VGC as though you were Steve. Before you decide.
- Suppose Steve was ill or had a good reason?

## CHARACTERISTICS OF GOOD EMPLOYEES (Page 2) EN5

### Scenario #2

Jennifer is a checker in a large grocery store. She is a good worker, very dependable, and never late for work. However, she makes at least one mistake a day on her cash register receipts because she does not take the time to count the change back to customers. The manager became tired of the mistakes, so he decided to speak to Jennifer about it. He suggested that to be more accurate, Jennifer slow down a bit and count the change back out loud to the customers. Jennifer became very upset and quit her job.

What at least 7 skills Jennifer should work on?

What would you have done if you were in Jennifer's position?

### Scenario #3

Tara, 18, puts statistical data into a computer for a local accounting firm. Her employer gives her directions on how to type the charts for each job. Sometimes Tara changes the format slightly, thinking her way is better, only to have the work returned to be redone. After spending two days redoing a report, her employer warned her that if she failed to follow directions again, she would be fired.

What trait(s) did Tara lack?

Suppose that Tara's way is better, should she still do it the way her employer wants it done? Why?

**Scenario #4**

Jessica and Lisa are secretaries in a large insurance regional office. Their work hours are from 8 AM to 4 PM. Jessica always arrives at work 10 to 15 minutes late, then goes to the ladies room to put on her make-up. She finally gets to her desk about 8:30 AM. Lisa always arrives at her desk promptly at 8:00 AM and begins her work. Even though Jessica has better secretarial skills than Lisa, Lisa got a raise when it came time for salary review and Jessica didn't.

Do you think Jessica's employer had a right to hold back her raise for being late? Why?

What could Jessica do to improve her chances of getting a raise next time?

**Scenario #5**

Megan was an office aide in a large employment agency. She was responsible for making copies and filing information. The ink in the copy machine needed to be changed every few days. Megan always asked one of the other employees to change the ink for her, which the other employees began to resent. Megan didn't want to learn how to change the ink because she didn't want to get ink smudges on her hands.

List at least 7 skills Megan should work on.

How could Megan benefit by learning to change the ink for herself? (List at least 3 ways)

1.

2.

3.

If you were an employer, what would you do about an employee who was not willing to learn?