

Workplace and Internship Readiness: Preparing for Work & Life

Starting your first “real” job can be intimidating. But when you know what to expect and learn how to be successful, you'll feel confident about the hiring process and prepared to put yourself out there! Discover how to build a well-rounded set of employability and personal leadership skills that allow you to guide your own career. Learn how to communicate with others, take initiative, set goals, problem-solve, research different career options, and envision your own personal career path. Get ready to create a powerful launching pad that will help you blast off into a great first job experience!

Unit 1: Know Yourself

To enter the workplace, you need to think about yourself as a product you're selling to potential employers. But before you can sell a product, you need to get to know it in depth. Searching for your first internship or job is a great opportunity to discover your unique strengths and how you can use them to achieve both personal and professional goals. Who are you, really? What abilities and aptitudes do you bring to a job role? What are your dreams and goals for the future? Once you've answered questions like these, you'll be ready to create promotional materials (a cover letter and resume) that will make a compelling sales pitch to employers.

What will you learn in this unit?

1. Develop the practice of self-awareness
2. Identify your core values
3. Describe your personality
4. Recognize specific employability skills you've developed and want to develop
5. Articulate the factors that motivate you

Unit 2: From Classroom to Employment

Once upon a time, finding work was as simple as seeing a “Help Wanted” sign in a shop or office and stepping inside to speak with the owner or manager. These days, you can still spot the odd “We're Hiring” sign, but finding the right opportunity typically requires several steps. You'll need to take your self-awareness to the next level so you can align your personal values, personality traits, skills, and strengths with a particular organization or career path. Learning to do that will give you a competitive edge in the job market. It will also simplify the process of developing the various documents you'll need for your job search, such as resumes, cover letters, and thank-you notes.

What will you learn in this unit?

1. Describe how learning on the job differs from learning in the classroom
2. Differentiate among different kinds of organizations and organizational structures
3. Conduct online research to identify employment opportunities
4. Create a complete, well-organized resume
5. Craft a cover letter tailored to the target employer
6. Prepare for a job interview

Unit 3: Workplace Behavior

When you think about “good behavior” in a school environment, you probably think of “rules” you need to obey, such as not chewing gum, not swearing, or not smoking. Some of these rules may be spelled out in your school's code of conduct, while others may be determined by individual teachers.

In the workplace, you'll find many more behavioral expectations, not all of which are written up in an employee

manual. Your employer will expect you to behave professionally, which means consciously adopting certain behaviors that enable you to complete your tasks and to work effectively with your colleagues. Fortunately, most of these behaviors are positive do's rather than negative don'ts, and with a little preparation, you will soon catch on.

What will you learn in this unit?

1. Describe appropriate grooming and attire for the workplace
2. Recognize the behaviors that will help you integrate into the workplace
3. Identify key behaviors your manager will appreciate
4. Articulate the role of the human resources department in your working life
5. Document workplace behaviors in a career portfolio

Unit 4: Communicating at Work

In the workplace, you'll engage in professional communication, which is a particular style of communication requiring a set of specific skills. As you develop these skills, you'll learn how to interact with both internal audiences (people inside the organization, including colleagues and managers) and external audiences (people outside the organization, such as customers, clients, and suppliers). You'll also become comfortable using various modes of communication, including face-to-face communication, written communication, presentations, and the telephone.

What will you learn in this unit?

1. Facilitate effective conversations via face-to-face interactions and phone calls
2. Follow an efficient process for producing workplace writing
3. Compose two common kinds of workplace writing: email messages and reports
4. Create and deliver professional presentations

Workplace and Internship Readiness: Midterm Exam

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from the first half of the course (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

Unit 5: Teamwork Makes the Dreamwork

Work is a team sport. Even jobs that involve solitary activities—such as thinking, researching, and writing—require workers to interact with a variety of other people. For instance, a lawyer drawing up a legal document interfaces with the client as well as administrative support staff and colleagues in the office. A welder fixing an underwater pipe interacts with other welders, the diving supervisor, the safety officer, and perhaps the supplier who provides tools and parts. Collaboration, the art of working productively with others, is therefore one of the most valuable employability skills you can cultivate. Knowing how to collaborate effectively also makes work a lot more fun!

What will you learn in this unit?

1. Describe the characteristics of a healthy, productive team
2. Explain the value of diversity and ways to foster it
3. Identify practices for managing team conflict
4. Describe the behaviors you need to participate effectively in meetings

5. Recognize common technology tools used for collaborating

Unit 6: Managing Your Self, Time, and Money

In the workplace, you'll likely work for a manager whose role is to take charge of a group of workers. But you'll also have to become your own manager. In fact, self-leadership forms the foundation of several important employability skills, such as self-awareness, adaptability, collaboration, and resilience. Leading yourself means taking responsibility for your health and well-being on every level—physical, psychological, and financial.

What will you learn in this unit?

1. Define self-leadership and its benefits
2. Use time management techniques to optimize your personal productivity
3. Manage your day-to-day personal finances
4. Engage in long-term personal financial planning

Unit 7: Protecting Yourself and Your Employer

Problem-solving is one of the most important skills you can bring to an employer because the world of work requires you to engage in ongoing troubleshooting and conflict resolution. Some of the problems you'll encounter will be technical. For instance, you may need to determine how to balance a budget or how to make a work process more efficient. But many of the problems you'll run into will be behavioral. They'll require you to comply with certain standards of conduct related to workplace ethics (the set of principles that govern behavior in a workplace) and safety, but there will be no clear instructions telling you how to do that. You'll need to develop self-awareness and reasoning skills so you can solve whatever problems come along in ways that satisfy your employer's standards of conduct as well as your own.

What will you learn in this unit?

1. Define workplace ethics
2. Describe common ethical issues that show up in the workplace
3. Recognize safety regulations that apply to various kinds of work
4. Apply ethical reasoning to solve behavioral issues in the workplace

Unit 8: Bringing It All Together—Becoming a Leader

As you gain work experience, you'll build on your self-leadership skills to become a leader of others. You'll discover that there are many different forms and styles of leadership. You can “lead from behind” as a mentor or coach or “lead from the front” as a bold visionary. Some leaders enjoy speaking to crowds and motivating large groups whereas others prefer to influence results by working with people one-on-one.

Whatever your personal leadership style, “influence” is the key word. Leadership skills enable you to influence the attitudes and actions of other people so that together you can achieve significant goals. Such skills don't just enhance your resume—they also strengthen your sense of personal purpose and increase the impact you make.

What will you learn in this unit?

1. Describe the critical thinking process
2. Solve problems using a scientific, data-driven approach
3. Cultivate a growth mindset
4. Develop a career plan

Workplace and Internship Readiness: Final Exam

- Review information acquired and mastered from this course up to this point.
- Take a course exam based on material from the second half of the course (Note: You will be able to open this exam only one time.)

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