



## Things to Consider for Job Searching

### Learning Outcomes

By the end of this unit the learner will be able to:

- ✓ Recognize the differences and benefits available through career coaches, counselors, and mentors

## Things to Consider for Job Searching

### Skill and Ability

#### The Things You Do Well

There are many different ways that we can measure and talk about our knowledge, skills, and abilities. Abilities and skills are things that you do well. You know what you do well because of your experience in school, previous work, hobbies, and so on. The things that we know and do well are the easiest to transfer into a new job.

#### Identifying Your Skills

Reviewing your resume (or the worksheet that you completed as your pre-assignment) can help you move through this activity. This exercise is intended to help you narrow down the things that you do well. If you are having trouble, pull out the copy of your resume that you brought with you as a part of your pre-assignment. It should list tasks or skills for a particular job that you've done.

For the purposes of this exercise, we'll group skills into several areas. Review the options below and then circle the areas that you are skilled in. We have left some blank space for you to add your own areas.

<p><b>Artistic/Creative</b></p> <p>Drawing, decorating, designing, painting, sculpting, singing, playing musical instruments, dancing, writing music</p>	<p><b>Leadership</b></p> <p>Leading activities, motivating, having others look to you for guidance or support, providing feedback</p>	<p><b>Manual</b></p> <p>Working with your hands, being physically active throughout the day, installing equipment</p>
<p><b>Clerical</b></p> <p>Operating office equipment, keeping records, keyboarding, reception</p>	<p><b>Mathematical</b></p> <p>Solving difficult math problems, understanding arithmetic, reasoning</p>	<p><b>Mechanical</b></p> <p>Working with machines, tools, repairing things or understanding how things work</p>

<b>Language</b> Writing, speaking, using correct grammar	<b>Persuasive</b> Influencing, selling, talking easily with people	<b>Scientific</b> Doing lab experiments and understanding scientific principles, engineering, programming computers
<b>Social</b> Working well with people; helping people and/or society	<b>Spatial</b> Seeing differences in size, form, and shape; visualizing relationships	<b>Teaching</b> Helping others learn, demonstrating, coaching, speaking

**Describe your top five to ten skills here:**

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**Pre-Assignment Review**

**Look at the resume that you brought and/or the worksheet you completed as part of the pre-assignment. What skills are listed there that you can add to the previous section?**

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In terms of searching for a job, it is fair to say that some skills you developed years ago may no longer be current. If you have not used certain skills within the past two years, consider crossing them off of your list. Be open to the fact that some skills, although we may not use them regularly, are pretty easy to remember (like riding a bicycle), while others (like using certain software), change very rapidly. Although we may remember what we did, we may no longer be as skilled as we once were.

## Vocation and Strategy

### What Does Vocation Mean?

“Vocation” is the word we use to describe a calling or work that you are called to do. It used to be frequently used in terms of religious work (i.e., called to the church), but really applies to anyone who works within his or her purpose. Working within your vocation means it is much more likely that you enjoy the work that you do. Work satisfaction is important as you look in terms of the next job that you want to do.

Your vocation, or purpose, is something that is a theme for your entire life, not just work. It is the type of service that you are here to provide; the aspects of life that you will serve, protect, or heal. That may sound vague, so let’s flesh it out a little.

Your purpose is present in every area of your life. It is:

- Fun
- Absorbing
- Energizing
- Fulfilling
- Something that fits you absolutely

You know you are living your purpose when:

- You like getting up in the morning (or at least most mornings!)
- You can see the contributions that you are making through work
- Your income meets your needs and goals
- Your relationships are satisfying
- You feel healthy and energetic
- You feel good about yourself

**Five Clues to Your Authentic Work Preferences**

**Think of the things you love to do when you have spare time. What are they?**

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**What parts of your present job (or things you do regularly) do you particularly like?**

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**What are your ten greatest successes in your eyes? (These are not necessarily the same accomplishments that other people might pick for you.)**

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**Is there a cause, value, or skill that you feel very passionate about?**

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**What would you be doing right now if you knew you could not fail?**

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**Job Satisfaction Survey**

Sometimes we take a job to fill a short-term need or without much planning, and then we work there for a while, or even 20 years, before thinking that this was not what we had planned for the rest of our careers. Other people seem to love their jobs no matter what they do. Then, there are people who seem to hate every job no matter what they do.

**Job Satisfaction Survey**

This exercise will give you some insight about where you are at today, and how much you could like your next job if you approach your search with a strategy in mind. Indicate how you feel about each item in the following list, where:

- 1. Strongly disagree
- 2. Agree some of the time
- 3. Agree strongly

	I like my current job (or the most recent one if you are currently not working).
	I know the direction I want my career to take.
	I can easily set my own goals.
	I usually reach the goals I set.
	I think of myself as a successful individual.
	I know my values and what needs my job should fulfill.
	I enjoy most of the tasks about my current (or most recent) job.
	My self-esteem is very healthy.
	I am excited about changing jobs.
	I look at change as something positive.
	My job (or most recent job) lets me be myself at work.
	I know the signs for when I need to change jobs.
	I make friends at work.
	I am a good friend or co-worker to the people I work with.
	I am doing the type of work that I want to be doing.
	<b>TOTAL</b>

Add up the scores. There are 15 statements, so your score should range between 15 and 45.

### Scoring

If you scored **40 or higher**, you are probably pretty satisfied at your current, or most recent, job. You can also probably adjust to a new work situation fairly easily because you target work that meets your purpose and values.

If you scored between **25 and 39**, you are somewhat satisfied with your most recent or last job, but not supercharged about it. You will need to do some internal work on achieving satisfaction about work –

your contributions, your reactions, and your satisfaction at being someone who works. This can be helped along by doing work that meets your purpose and values.

If you scored **below 24**, your satisfaction level is very low. Doing exercises like the ones in this course may help, but you could also consider other supports that will help you to find work and design a life that really reflects the things that you believe in and the type of work that is very important to you. Doing reading in the self-development area and working with a personal coach are both good ways to help you figure out what you want as well as uncover things that make you happy.

## Resources

### Checking Out the Jobs

There are many places to go to find out what is happening in the workplace, and what jobs are opening up or leaving the marketplace. Learn your local labor market in order to make the most of it. Determine who your most capable resources are. Understand the differences and similarities between coaches, consultants, mentors, and counselors.

**Write down as many different job titles as you can in 60 seconds.**

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### Resource Room

#### Identifying Resources

When you first get started on a job search, all kinds of information will reveal itself to you. But where do you really need to go?

If you consider that there are more than 20,000 job titles listed in the comprehensive resource lists that exist today, it can seem like a huge job to try to decide what we might do for a living. In addition, there are jobs that drop off the list each year (become redundant) and new ones are added. That is why we

spent some time during this course talking about what is important to us and what our values are, as well as what makes us happy while we work. Sometimes we can undertake this whole job search thing on our own quite easily, and other times, we need some help.

For comprehensive information about job information in your area, we suggest that you do an Internet search, and, in addition to your country or region, use search terms such as:

- Occupational profiles
- Job profiles
- Labor market information
- Job futures
- Occupational assessments
- Job interest profiles

### **Getting Help**

We are surrounded today by references to career oriented helpers, including coaches, counselors, and practitioners. What does it all mean?

The specific person that you seek to help you, if you need someone, will depend on your situation, your location, who is available, and what you can afford. Depending on the nature of your situation, you may be able to access free services through your local government.

### **Career Development Professionals**

This is the term officially recognized as the classification for people who help other people with work issues. Common job titles include Career Counselors, Career Coaches, Career Practitioners, Job Coaches, Vocational Consultants, Work Assessment Specialists, and Vocational Evaluators.

Career development professionals help clients of all ages:

- Make plans and decisions related to choosing a career direction.
- Select education and training programs.
- Balance work and other life roles.
- Navigate career transitions and stages.
- Enhance career satisfaction.
- Find employment or self-employment opportunities, write resumes, develop portfolios, and prepare for interviews.

Working with clients individually or in groups, career development professionals may:

- Help people develop a better appreciation of their unique characteristics and how those characteristics relate to career choices.
- Use various assessment tools to help clients identify their interests, values, beliefs, lifestyle preferences, aptitudes, and abilities, and relate them to the world of work.
- Help clients identify educational requirements and develop training plans.
- Facilitate career management and career decision-making workshops.
- Work with clients who have disabilities, language and cultural differences, or other special needs that affect their employment prospects.
- Help clients deal with barriers to achieving their career plans.
- Help employed clients plan career laddering within organizations, cope successfully with job dissatisfaction, or make occupational or job changes.
- Provide current labor market information to help clients make realistic occupational or employment decisions.
- Market clients to potential employers and help clients find job or work experience placements.
- Assist clients with implementing effective employment search strategies, writing resumes, and developing career portfolios and interview skills.
- Plan and implement career and employment-related programs.
- Refer clients to appropriate services to address their particular needs.
- Work co-operatively with community groups and agencies, businesses and other organizations involved in providing career planning resources.
- Use computers to write reports and proposals, and research information on the Internet.
- Perform related administrative tasks such as keeping records.

*(Source: Government of Alberta, Occupational Profiles)*

Career Development Professionals fall into three well-defined categories:

### **Career Counselor**

A career counselor has the most training, usually a university Masters and sometimes a Ph.D. A career counselor is not a therapist and does not spend time delving into your past. Career counseling is not therapy. Career counselors are often qualified to offer different types of assessments to help you understand your strengths, goals, and action plan. In many regions, in order to advertise as a “counselor,” they have to have completed advanced education in the field. You may find career counselors managing career-related programs, teaching college or certificate programs, and speaking at conferences, in addition to providing group and individual career counseling.

## **Career Development Practitioner (CDP)**

These practitioners generally have at least two years of post-secondary education specifically in career development. They may specialize in a specific element of the job search (such as work placement for disabled adults) or have a broader skill level. They are often qualified to use some assessment and career development tools. They also set up and follow through on individual and group action plans. Career development practitioners may work independently, at community based job clinics, for companies that recruit continually, and so on.

## **Career Coach**

A career coach has often completed a college or intensive qualification course. Coaches frequently work in several industries, not just careers, although they may take specialized training in the career area. Career coaches generally use the coaching system that they were trained with, and many of those organizations require that the certified coach take part in regular upgrading in order to maintain their certifications. This is becoming increasingly important since this is the only way the coaching profession is regulated.

## **Specialties**

Other specialists are also emerging within the field. These include:

### **Resume Writers**

While a resume writer may also be a career coach, this is not always the case. A resume writer specializes in creating individualized and targeted resumes (as do most skilled career counselors and career coaches). They may not, however, have additional expertise in the career development field that will support a job search.

### **Branding Specialists**

This is a subset of career development for people who work on a complete package that includes consideration of one's image during a job search and even within a career. They can incorporate branding in the career search as a way to help an individual stand out among other candidates, in the way that is similar to how Coca-Cola competes with Pepsi.