

 **PARADIGM**
EDUCATION SOLUTIONS
A DIVISION OF KENDALL HUNT

TRANSITIONING TO WORK

Using **Untapped Strengths** to **Get a New Job,**
Further Your Education, or **Find a Side Gig**

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Instructor Resources

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About the Instructor Resources

Millions of people each year make a career transition and the numbers are expected to rise. These people find they want to change the direction of their careers. Whether they are leaving an education program, entering the workforce after an absence, have never worked, want to entirely change industries, or work in a completely different field, the prospect of a career transition is both scary and exciting. By better understanding career transitions, people can ensure a successful transition.

When most people transition to work, they often mistakenly believe there is only one career path to follow – the one they are currently on. They immediately begin searching for a job that is similar to one they had in the past, using only a small portion of their strengths and talents. They are under the impression that this one career path is their only option. Fortunately, people transitioning to work have many options available to them using untapped and hidden strengths.

These instructor resources are designed to help all people make a career transition to navigate the complex process. They provide information, resources, and activities to help people make a successful transition to the workforce. It helps them develop a plan for the future and shows them tools and techniques for ensuring they experience success. The instructor resources have seven chapters that correspond with the ***Transitioning to Work (TWI)*** workbook and TWI assessment. The chapters include:

- **Introduction**
- **Chapter 1** – Making Sense of Your Transition to Work
- **Chapter 2** – Career Interests and Options
- **Chapter 3** – Research and Decision-Making
- **Chapter 4** – My Career Plan
- **Chapter 5** – Strategies to Transition to a Job
- **Chapter 6** – Strategies to Transition to Paid Gigs
- **Chapter 7** – Strategy to Transition to Educational Opportunities
- **Chapter 8** – Your Final Career Plan

This guide is designed to help you conduct a class or group workshop on teaching the process for transitioning to work. Each section contains valuable information related to each step in the process, teaching tips to help make instruction easier, and journaling exercises that will ensure that students understand the material presented.

Components of the Instructor Resources

These instructor resources help instructors and group facilitators to use the ***Transitioning to Work: Using Untapped Strengths to Get a New Job, Further Your Education, or Find a Side Gig*** workbook better. It includes two primary components:

Class/Group Activities

Class/Group Activities are exercises that assist participants in self-reflection, enhance self-knowledge, identify potential ineffective behaviors, and teach more effective ways of transitioning to work. The activities are brief, easy-to-use self-reflection tools designed to promote learning about the complex career transition process. Many different types of activities are provided for you to pick and choose the activities most needed by your participants.

These activities can be used and are appropriate for a variety of classes and group sessions. Be mindful that the exercises contained in these resources may not apply to all participants or all class or workshop situations. You can adapt any activity that meets the needs of your participants and the specific career transition issues they face. With your help, I'm confident they will overcome the obstacles preventing them from successfully transitioning to the workforce.

Journaling

Journaling questions are included at the end of each chapter. Journaling questions help participants reflect on their emotional reactions to their transition to work. Encourage participants to write everything down in a journal. Remind them that journaling can be therapeutic as well as a way to develop greater emotional well-being.

Introduction

Transitions are about adapting to change. For whatever reason, your career and life are changing. You are making the transition from unemployment to employment. You experience change as “collisions” with your future. Your future is changing (or about to change), and you have many different emotions about the change, think about ways you can influence the change, and do what you can to influence your future. You feel like you have limitations, but you also have opportunities, options, and tremendous possibilities. You can engage creatively by planning a future career path to develop extreme levels of hope and success.

To the Instructor: Transitions are a collision with the future. These collisions are filled with uncertainty, a loss of control, anxiety, and apprehension about the unknown. These collisions are also filled with excitement, promise, and possibilities. It is vital that participants explore their positive and negative emotions related to their transition.

Activity – Collision Points

The instructor will ask participants to write down some of the positive and negative emotions they are experiencing in their transition to work. The instructor will create two columns on the board: Positive Emotions and Negative Emotions. After participants have had sufficient time to write down some of their thoughts, the instructor will ask participants to shout out some of the emotions they wrote down. Move around the group and allow each participant to share emotions.

To the Instructor: Many myths accompany any career transition. Many of your participants will be living by some of these myths. You can assist them in dispelling these myths, so they do not interfere with each participant’s transition to work.

Activity – Myths About Career Transitions

Read each of the myths in dark print. Ask participants to explain why they think the myth is untrue. Then read the response provided.

- **I am alone in this process.** You are not alone. You have a support system around you that you can rely on. You also have the wisdom of others who have gone through this process before you. Their wisdom is contained in the pages of this workbook. Use this wisdom to find career success!
- **I'm not prepared to make a successful career transition.** You have many untapped sources of knowledge, skills, and strengths. However, until this transition, you have been unaware of these talents. You can now harness all your talents as you prepare for your career transition.
- **I don't know how to make a successful transition to work.** This knowledge is available to everyone. However, the process for making a successful transition is not taught in school. By completing the activities in this workbook, you will learn all the skills you need to know to develop and follow a personal career plan.
- **Now that I'm in transition, I'm not in control of my career.** You, and you alone, are responsible for exploring your personal interests, making career decisions, and implementing a career plan.
- **The transition to work process is too complex.** The transition to work process is complex, but you can do it! Throughout the workbook, you have an opportunity to adjust your attitude, enhance your career planning and decision-making skills, and form new habits.

Chapter 1

Making Sense of Your Transition to Work

Learning Objectives

These activities are designed to assist participants in successfully completing the transition-to-work process. Completing the activities and journaling questions in this chapter will allow you to:

- Help participants understand the various aspects of a career transition.
- Help participants explain the connection between transitions and change.
- Help participants learn ways to respond to change.
- Help participants learn strategies for maintaining a positive attitude.
- Help participants explore ways to take time and pivot.
- Help participants discover how to control their work output.

Information about Change

To the Instructor: Moving through change can be difficult. The path through change is probably not going to be predictable or smooth for most people. Usually, people navigate change and transition by moving through a series of five emotions before accepting change. It is vital to allow participants to talk about and explore how they feel about change and their transition to work.

Activity – Emotions of Change

Write these emotions of change on the board. Explain to participants that these emotions typically occur in the order presented but not always. Ask participants to write about the emotions they experienced as they moved, or are moving, through change. When finished, allow participants time to share their stories with others in the group.

STAGE 1: SHOCK - People in this stage attempt to deny the news about a current or future change. They might say “No, not me!” or “It can’t be true!” This stage is full of anxiety and runs its course in a relatively short time. It is considered a state of denial.

STAGE 2: ANGER - In this stage, people begin to get angry. Initially, they feel anger toward the people they feel are responsible for their change and blame others. After they have expressed their anger at outside sources, they may feel angry at themselves. Their anger is turned inward and becomes self-critical. They may say things like “If only I...” or “If I would have ...”

STAGE 3: BARGAINING - People in this stage become calculating and reflective. Some attempt to make a deal with their higher power or the people involved in the change process. As their attempts to compromise fail, they usually give up and move to the next stage. They ask such questions as “What can I do now?” or “Please give me another chance...” They try to identify their options and wish that things could be different.

STAGE 4: DEPRESSION - People in this stage begin to feel sad and/or depressed and feel there are limited or no options. They often become silent and withdrawn. They begin to experience increasing weakness, discomfort, and personal deterioration. They may feel a sense of meaninglessness, frustration, self-doubt, and lethargy and may want to be left alone. They may feel guilty and unworthy and feel as if nobody cares what happens to them.

STAGE 5: ACCEPTANCE - People in this stage are at the end of their struggle. They accept that change happens to everyone, can be overcome, and may even be an opportunity. They begin focusing on the realities of the situation and begin to let go of their negative feelings. They notice that the pain begins to lessen, the struggle seems less difficult, and it is time to move on with their lives. They accept their “new normal.”

Ask students to describe which stage they are in and how they can move to the acceptance stage.

To The Instructor: Change affects people going through the transition to work. There are many misconceptions about change and its effect on how people move through the career transition process. Take time to explore some of the misconceptions of change with participants.

Activity: True or False?

Read each of the statements, one by one, to the participants. Ask them if they think the statement is true or false. Allow them to defend their answers and debate their answers with other participants.

1. Change is a part of everyone’s life. (*TRUE*)

Remind participants that change is everywhere. Change occurs in all aspects of life, including a career. It is important and life-changing to be able to cope with and manage it effectively

2. All people go through a cycle of thoughts and emotions to some degree when they encounter changes in their lives. (*TRUE*)

Remind participants to keep in mind that these thoughts and emotions will not last. It is necessary to go through the stages in order to effectively cope with change.

3. Change cannot be managed. (*FALSE*)

Remind participants that they can not only cope with change but use change as an opportunity for welcome and exciting transformations.

4. Change cannot be controlled. (*FALSE*)

Remind participants that it is crucial for them to take control over changes in their lives by taking responsibility for how they respond to the change. They can control what they think, feel, and act. They can gain control by taking care of themselves, staying positive, and planning for the future.

Positive Attitude

To the Instructor: In a career transition, the thoughts people have can be their best friend or worst enemy. To overcome a lack of motivation, it is crucial that you help participants pay more attention to their thinking and the “language” of their thoughts. When many people in a career transition encounter difficult challenge, they automatically start to think negatively. They can improve their attitude to become more positive by becoming aware of their negative “self-talk” and replace negative thoughts with positive ones.

Activity: Attend to Your Thinking

Remind participants that “sometimes people in a career transition often imagine the worst in situations or themselves and often are unaware of their negative thoughts.”

Work on replacing negative self-talk with positive words. For example, you could replace “I’m terrible at networking” with “I enjoy talking with people and now I get to talk about myself.” Develop positive statements to replace negative ones using happy, joyful, adoring, passionate, and warm words. It would be helpful to avoid negative words such as worried, anxious, upset, tired, bored, scared, never, and can’t.

Put a couple of examples on the board:

- *“I’m not good at looking for a job!”* How can this be revised so it is more positive?
- *“I have no skills.”* How can this be revised so it is more positive?

Now ask participants yell out a few of their negative thoughts. Then ask others to revise it so that it is more positive.

Pivoting

To the Instructor: Pivoting is making a course correction in a career. Pivoting is the ability to adapt to change, be creative in identifying possibilities for the future, adjust your career trajectory so that participants are even more successful in the future than they had been in the past.

Activity: How Can I Pivot?

Remind participants that they can view their transition to work as an opportunity rather than a fearful process. Ask participants to answer three critical pivoting questions:

- *How will you change directions?*
- *What habits will you change so that you are successful?*
- *What possibilities now feel open to you?*

Ask participants to share one of their answers to any of the three questions.

Control Work Output

To the Instructor: Locus of control reflects the degree to which people perceive their outcomes to result from their own behavior or forces external to themselves. Participants need to begin moving from an external locus of control to an internal locus of control.

Activity: What is a Locus of Control?

Put the two definitions of locus of control on the board:

- *People with a strong **external locus of control** believe that their success and reward come from influences outside of their control. In other words, things happen to them. They think that outside forces, people, fate, or other external forces determine their success and what will happen while they are working. They make excuses and blame others for what happens to them in their transition to employment.*
- *People with a strong **internal locus of control** believe that their success or failure is their own doing. They push themselves to achieve significant accomplishments and think that the good or bad that occurs is due to their actions. They feel that they control what happens to them in their transition to employment.*

Now read the following example to the group: *Sherry is transitioning to work after graduating from a vocational training program.*

Ask the following questions:

- *Describe how she would react with an external locus of control.*
- *Next, ask them to describe how she would react with an internal locus of control.*

How will participants ensure that they will maintain an internal locus of control throughout their transition to work?

Journaling Questions

The following questions are provided for you to use as journaling questions. Keep in mind that many of the discussion questions are personal in nature and that readers may be reluctant to discuss these issues with others. You can also ask readers to answer these questions as part of a journal. Journaling is an extremely powerful tool for self-reflection.

1. How do you have trouble remaining positive in your career transition?
2. What scares you about change?
3. How would you like to pivot, and what challenges do you foresee in pivoting?

Chapter 2

Career Interests & Options

Learning Objectives

These activities are designed to assist participants in successfully completing the transition-to-work process. Completing the activities and journaling questions in this chapter will allow you to:

- Help participants create a vision of their new future.
- Help participants explore their assessed interests from the Transition-to-Work Inventory.
- Help participants discover how to access their untapped strengths.
- Help participants learn how to identify their career options by using the Transition Triangle to explore jobs, paid gigs, and educational opportunities.

Envisioning the Future

To the Instructor: People in a career transition can benefit from having a positive vision of their “ideal” futures. As the saying goes, “What you can visualize, you can achieve.” Therefore, to achieve a successful career transition filled with possibilities, people first must have a clear vision of their ultimate goal.

Activity: My Future

Have students think about and imagine their “ideal” life ten years into the future. Put the following questions on the board. Then ask participants to answer the questions on a sheet of paper. Ask them to provide as many details as possible.

- *Where are you living?*
- *What are you doing for work?*
- *Are you working full-time or part-time?*
- *Are you working at any side gigs?*
- *Are you in an educational or training course?*

Go around the group and ask people to describe their ideal future scenarios.

Interests

To the Instructor: To make a successful transition, people need to be aware of their primary interests. These interests can come from work-related activities, spare-time hobbies, courses taken in school, or home-based projects.

Activity: What Was I Born to Do?

When thinking about their career interests, many people ask the wrong question. They ask, “What could I do?” While this is a good question, it is too general to answer. A better question for participants to ponder is, “What was I born to do?”

Put this sentence starter on the board: “*I was born to...*”

Ask participants to finish the sentence starters by writing several answers on a sheet of paper. Have participants share some of their answers.

- *I was born to...*
- *I was born to...*
- *I was born to...*
- *I was born to...*
- *I was born to...*
- *I was born to...*

Lastly, ask participants to search for patterns in their answers. For example, many of their answers may include working with animals, or helping young children.

Untapped Strengths

To the Instructor: Spare-time activities provide a tremendous source of untapped knowledge, skills, and talents.

Activity: What Are Julio’s Untapped Strengths?

Read the following scenario to the class:

Julio enjoys gardening in his spare time. He has a vegetable garden and a flower garden. Neighbors have come to Julio for help with their gardens or to design gardens for them. He also enjoys reading about plants and watching television shows about gardening.

Ask participants to get into smaller groups. Allow them to work collaboratively to brainstorm some possible jobs, part-time gigs, educational opportunities, or entrepreneurial options available to Julio.

Get participants back into the larger group. Allow a spokesperson from each group to describe some opportunities they believe are available for Julio.

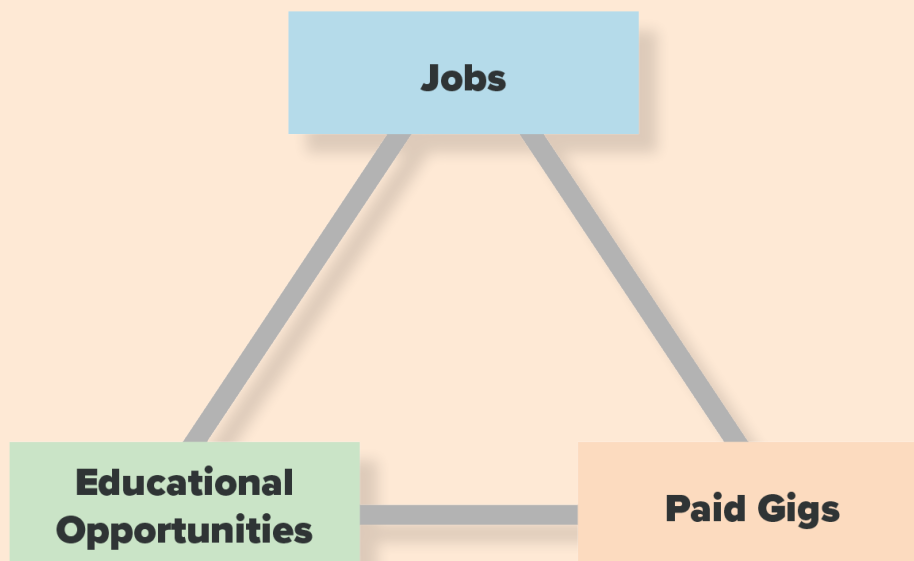
Components of a Career

To the Instructor: When most people think of a career, they think of the jobs people do. A career is much more than your job. Your career is comprised of three different components, and these components provide multiple methods for transitioning to the workplace. Your interests can be leveraged for jobs, paid gigs, and educational opportunities. That's what makes career transitions frustrating and extremely exciting at the same time.

Activity: Understanding the Transition Triangle

Say to the participants, “You can use the Transition Triangle to help you explore many ways to put your strengths to work to make money. The Transition Triangle helps you create a comprehensive career plan full of a variety of possibilities related to your specific interests.”

Put the following diagram on the board:



Ask participants to describe what is meant by Jobs, Paid Gigs, and Educational Opportunities. After some discussion, provide these answers.

- **Jobs:** Your participation in paid and unpaid jobs, including people working at a full-time job, volunteering, and working in the home.
- **Paid Gigs:** Your participation in short-term projects that allow you to make money, gain skills, and acquire experience in fields of interest, including moonlighters, independent contractors, and part-time gig workers.
- **Educational Opportunities:** Your participation in any type of education and training, including school programs, on-the-job training, college coursework, online education, and formal training programs.

Remind participants, “You can use the Transition Triangle to make decisions about your future career path, pursue a career that uses all of your talents, and better understand what you enjoy doing regularly.”

Case Study: Using the Transition Triangle

To the Instructor: Although your work plays an integral part in a career, careers are much more than having a job. When most people think of work, they picture people working at traditional jobs for eight hours, getting paid, receiving benefits, and earning vacation time. In reality, work takes many forms. There are actually many diverse ways people “work.”

Activity: Transition Triangle

Let’s look at examples of how the Transition Triangle has been used to develop a comprehensive career plan. Read the following case study to the participants:

Omari has just graduated from a vocational training program. He is trained in heating, ventilation, and air conditioning (HVAC). How can he use the three components of a career (Jobs, Paid Gigs, and Educational Opportunities) to plan a fantastic transition to work?

Allow students some time to think about the case study, and then write some of their ideas on the board. Stress the many possibilities that exist for any occupation in which people are interested.

Journaling Questions

The following questions are provided for you to use as journaling questions. Keep in mind that many of the discussion questions are personal in nature and that readers may be reluctant to discuss these issues with others. You can also ask readers to answer these questions as part of a journal. Journaling is an extremely powerful tool for self-reflection.

1. What scares you most about the future?
2. What are some of your untapped strengths, and why have they remained untapped?
3. How can you use the Transition Triangle to create possibilities about your future?

Chapter 3

Research & Decision-Making

Learning Objectives

These activities are designed to assist participants in successfully completing the transition-to-work process. Completing the activities and journaling questions in this chapter will allow you to:

- Help participants explore occupations and career options related to their interests.
- Help participants learn about social media sites that they can use to explore occupations of interest.
- Help participants gain skills in conducting research online.

Explore Occupations

To the Instructor: There are many different ways to explore occupations. When you are trying to make decisions about your best career options, the next step is to conduct research about the career options.

Activity: Occupational Exploration Debate

Write the following ways to explore occupations on the board:

- *Job Shadowing*
- *Informational Interviewing*
- *Networking*
- *Talking to a Mentor*
- *Searching Social Media Sites*
- *Online Sources*

Ask participants to rank order the items on the board from 1 (Most Effective) to 6 (Least Effective).

Allow participants to discuss and debate how they ranked ordered the items.

Use Technology for Research

To the Instructor: With an increase in technology, participants can begin to access some of this technology to explore occupations of interest.

Activity: YouTube Videos

Tell participants that modern technology can be very effective in helping them research occupations. Ask participants to go to YouTube (Youtube.com) and explore videos related to one of their occupations of interest. Have them report back to the group on their findings.

Make an Outline

To the Instructor: Everyone needs research skills. Research skills allow participants to find information about occupations and programs before they make career decisions. Research skills include gathering information about occupations, reviewing information, and analyzing and interpreting the information to make informed decisions.

Activity: My Outline

Say to the participants, *“When starting any research activity, you should make an outline to help guide your research efforts. This outline includes a plan for any information you want to research, questions that concern you, and any insights you need to make a great decision. Your plan can include a plan for how you can organize your research into manageable parts. This plan may also include a schedule detailing when each piece of your project should be complete.”*

Ask participants to create a research outline that includes:

- *Information I want to research:*
- *Questions that concern me:*
- *Insights I need to make a decision:*
- *How I will break down my research to effectively manage it:*
- *My schedule for research activities includes:*

Narrowing

To the Instructor: Research allows participants to narrow their list of potential career options, so they do not get overwhelmed.

Activity: Narrow My List

Read the following to the participants, “*Start with a list of jobs, paid gigs, and educational opportunities you identified on your TWI assessment and activities in the workbook. Start by examining the research you gathered about each of the options on your list. Continue narrowing down your list of possible career options by learning what working in different fields is really like.*”

Have participants create a list of their top five career options.

Journaling Questions

The following questions are provided for you to use as journaling questions. Keep in mind that many of the discussion questions are personal in nature and that readers may be reluctant to discuss these issues with others. You can also ask readers to answer these questions as part of a journal. Journaling is an extremely powerful tool for self-reflection.

1. Why is researching occupations such a difficult task?
2. What research methods do you prefer and why?
3. How can research affect your career decisions?

Chapter 4

My Career Plan

Learning Objectives

These activities are designed to assist participants in successfully completing the transition-to-work process. Completing the activities and journaling questions in this chapter will allow you to:

- Help participants understand the importance of a career plan in their transition to work.
- Help participants explore why they need a career plan.
- Help participants understand the goal-setting process.
- Help participants understand the differences between goals and SMART goals.
- Help participants set SMART goals related to their career interests.

Create a Career Plan

To the Instructor: Now that you have a broad vision for the types of jobs, paid gigs, and educational opportunities you would like to pursue in the future, you can begin to develop a career plan by breaking your initial vision into long-term goals that provide better clarity. For example, your long-term goals may include getting a college degree, starting a landscaping business, or learning to repair computers.

Activity: My Long-Term Goals

Say to the participants, “*Long-term goals are goals you would like to achieve far in the future, maybe even ten years from now. Long-term goals provide the basic framework through which you will begin to operate. This allows you to work backward to the present time.*”

Ask participants to write down three possible long-term goals based on their interests. Then, ask them to rank their order from most interesting to least interesting.

Breaking Long-Term Goals Down

To the Instructor: Long-term goals often seem so far away that participants get stuck trying to figure out how (and where) to start. Therefore, they can generate energy and momentum by identifying smaller, more specific goals that provide them with the drive to reach bigger goals.

Activity: Breaking Down Long-Term Goals

Say to the participants, “*Short-term goals are the small actions that support your long-term goals.*”

Write this example on the board:

My long-term goal is to get a college degree in business.

My short-term goals include:

- 1. Research colleges in my community.*
- 2. Identify sources of financial assistance.*
- 3. Complete the admissions application.*

Ask students that for the long-term goal you have identified, list 3-5 short-term goals that support this long-term goal.

SMART Goals

To the Instructor: Goal setting is a critical component of any career plan. However, it is vital to have a system for setting goals. Goals keep you motivated to achieve your interests. The SMART Goal-setting system helps participants ensure they achieve the goals they set.

Activity: Ensure Your Goals Are SMART

Write the SMART Goal-Setting Process on the board:

S

(Specific) – Is the goal you set clearly defined?

M

(Measured) – How will you know when you have achieved the goal?

A

(Attainable) – Can you attain the goal?

R

(Realistic) – Is the goal realistic for you to achieve?

T

(Time-Oriented) – What deadline have you set for reaching the goal?

Continued - Activity: Ensure Your Goals Are SMART

For this activity:

1. Ask participants to describe one long-term goal they have set for themselves. Ask them to write it as a SMART goal.
2. Ask participants to define several activities that will move them closer to their goal.
3. Ask participants to share their goals with others.

Journaling Questions

The following questions are provided for you to use as journaling questions. Keep in mind that many of the discussion questions are personal in nature and that readers may be reluctant to discuss these issues with others. You can also ask readers to answer these questions as part of a journal. Journaling is an extremely powerful tool for self-reflection.

1. Describe your current career plan. What additional steps do you need to complete to achieve your career goal?
2. What obstacles do you foresee affecting your current career plan?
3. How will SMART goal setting help you overcome these obstacles?

Chapter 5

Strategies to Transition to a Job

Learning Objectives

These activities are designed to assist participants in successfully completing the transition-to-work process. Completing the activities and journaling questions in this chapter will allow you to:

- Help participants learn about the three types of resumes.
- Help participants explore ways to search for a job and post their resume on electronic job boards.
- Help participants understand the process of employment interviews, explore how to effectively answer interview questions about their background, and prepare to make a good impression in an employment interview.

Different Types of Resumes

To the Instructor: There are different types of resumes from which participants can choose. The two most popular are functional and chronological, and then some people prefer a combination of the two.

- Chronological resumes require you to list your work experience and education in sequence. This can be a problem if you have a gap in your work history or have limited work experience.
- Functional or skills-based resumes focus more on your skill set than work history. Some people have a very jumpy or spotty work history and so that type of resume minimizes that and focuses more so on the skill set and the job training and the soft skills that someone has.
- Combination resumes mix aspects of functional and chronological resumes.

Activity: Three Resumes

To help people decide which type of resume is best for them, ask them to create three different resumes. Have them start with basic information that is contained on a resume. Then have them put the information into chronological, functional, and combination formats.

Have people get into pairs and share their work. Have pairs provide feedback about the formats they prefer.

Develop An Internet Search Strategy

To the Instructor: The internet provides a tremendous advantage for participants transitioning to the world of work. However, it is vital to understand how to use technology to search for a job. Because there are so many people looking for jobs online, and thousands of jobs boards to search through, participants need to develop a strategy for accessing jobs via the Internet.

Activity: My Online Search Strategy

1. Provide participants with access to technology (computer labs or cell phones).
2. Allow participants to begin by spending time exploring the major job search engines like Monster, Career Builder, and Yahoo. Make sure they post their resume on these sites so employers can contact you if they are interested.
3. Use job integrator search engines like Jobster, SimplyHired, and Indeed.com. These engines search the Internet and grab all the jobs listed on other sites and make them available. Through these boards, participants can identify jobs they may have missed through the bigger job boards.
4. Rely on other sources to find leads, including company websites, Google searches, and job boards hosted by the school participants are attending.

Journaling Questions

The following questions are provided for you to use as journaling questions. Keep in mind that many of the discussion questions are personal in nature and that readers may be reluctant to discuss these issues with others. You can also ask readers to answer these questions as part of a journal. Journaling is an extremely powerful tool for self-reflection.

1. What aspects of the job search frighten you? Why?
2. What have your previous experiences in searching for a job been like?
3. How will you maintain a positive attitude in your search for a job?

Chapter 6

Strategies to Transition to Paid Gigs

Learning Objectives

These activities are designed to assist participants in successfully completing the transition-to-work process. Completing the activities and journaling questions in this chapter will allow you to:

- Help participants better understand the “Gig” Economy.
- Help participants explore various types of gigs available to people in a transition to work.
- Help participants explore their motives for searching for a gig.
- Help participants examine their readiness for self-employment

The “Gig” Economy

To the Instructor: Things in the workplace are very different than they used to be, especially in the ways people work. More and more people find themselves working at short, sometimes temporary jobs and then moving on. This style of working is generally referred to as the “gig economy.” In the gig economy, people take gigs through job sites, create freelance business opportunities, and identify innovative methods of generating income for themselves.

Activity: What Are Gigs?

Ask the group to break into smaller groups. Have them research and write down their thoughts about what constitutes a gig. Ask them to provide examples of gig workers.

After sufficient time, you can say, “Paid gigs include temporary work for clients within a wide range of industries and opportunities, including independent representatives through direct selling, ride-sharing drivers, home delivery drivers, renting out assets, selling items through online platforms, moonlighting work, freelance gigs, and contract opportunities, the options for earning or increasing your income are endless. The gig economy allows people who are transitioning to work to create multiple careers.”

Can I Afford It?

To the Instructor: For many employees, paid gigs are a great way to work, earn extra money, and gain valuable skills. However, there are some downsides to part-time gig work. Participants need to be aware of these downsides as they think about integrating gigs into their career plans.

Activity: Assessing Affordability

Ask participants to brainstorm possible challenges to working at paid gigs.

Write their responses on the board.

After sufficient time, add some of these to the list:

- *Flexibility of working gigs can disrupt the work-life balance, sleep patterns, and activities of daily life.*
- *Workers have to make themselves available when gigs come up.*
- *People must constantly search for new gigs.*
- *Competition for gigs has increased.*
- *Gig workers are not covered by most insurance policies.*
- *Unemployment insurance usually doesn't cover gig workers who can't find employment.*
- *Limited job security.*
- *No retirement savings.*

Entrepreneurship?

To the Instructor: According to the World Economic Forum, “entrepreneurship refers to an individual’s ability to turn ideas into action and is therefore a key competence for all, helping people to be more creative and self-confident in whatever they undertake.”

Activity: Entrepreneurial Ideas

Ask the class to think about their top three interests.

Next, ask them to generate ideas about potential small businesses they could start in the future.

Lastly, ask them to identify several action steps they could take to put their idea into action. Ask everyone to share their ideas with the others in the group.

Journaling Questions

The following questions are provided for you to use as journaling questions. Keep in mind that many of the discussion questions are personal in nature and that readers may be reluctant to discuss these issues with others. You can also ask readers to answer these questions as part of a journal. Journaling is an extremely powerful tool for self-reflection.

1. What are the pros and cons of a paid gig for you?
2. How could you incorporate a paid gig into your career plan?
3. What types of gigs would best help your career development?

Chapter 7

Strategy to Transition to Educational Opportunities

Learning Objectives

These activities are designed to assist participants in successfully completing the transition-to-work process. Completing the activities and journaling questions in this chapter will allow you to:

- Help participants understand why education is vital in a career plan.
- Help participants explore the value of education.
- Help participants learn how individual courses taken on their own can benefit their career development.

Value of Education

To the Instructor: Many people often do not understand the value of attaining additional education. Education is more than reading, writing, science, history, and arithmetic. It is one of the most important investments participants can make in generating lifetime income.

Activity: How Much Do You Value Education?

Place these statistics on the board:

According to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2017), Median weekly earnings (in dollars) and unemployment rate (in percent) by educational attainment.

Educational attainment	Median weekly earnings	Unemployment rate
Doctoral Degree	\$1,743	1.5%
Professional Degree	\$1,836	1.5%
Master's Degree	\$1,401	2.2%
Bachelor's Degree	\$1,173	2.5%
Associate Degree	\$836	3.4%
Some College, No Degree	\$774	4.0%
High School Diploma, No College	\$712	4.6%
Less than a High School Diploma	\$520	6.5%

Break the group into smaller groups. Ask each group to identify five insights from the chart, and then report back to the larger group to discuss their findings.

I Need More Education

To the Instructor: Continuous learning is a critical aspect of each participant's career plan. By acquiring knowledge and gaining additional competencies, you can expand your skill set to attract and open a variety of interesting career possibilities. For example, you might have a long-term goal of starting your own business. While you are searching for a job and working at a gig, you might also begin taking five-minute classes for information about beginning a successful micro business.

Activity: Reflect and Write

Put the following questions on the board and say, *"In your transition to work, you will pursue educational opportunities for many reasons, including the following. Write your answers to each of these questions."*

- *How does education allow you to make more money than you will make over the life of your career?*
- *How does education provide increased flexibility and allow you to have more control over the types of jobs you can get?*
- *How does education open career paths that you thought were unavailable to you?*
- *How does education promote your efforts to climb corporate ladders or put together a career path that includes many different options?*
- *How does education provide you with enhanced job security against layoffs?*
- *How does education give you an edge against the competition for jobs?*

Go around the group and ask people to explain their answers to the questions.

Journaling Questions

The following questions are provided for you to use as journaling questions. Keep in mind that many of the discussion questions are personal in nature and that readers may be reluctant to discuss these issues with others. You can also ask readers to answer these questions as part of a journal. Journaling is an extremely powerful tool for self-reflection.

1. How is education an important aspect of your career plan?
2. What educational opportunities are available in your community and how can you take advantage of them?
3. What aspects of getting additional education scare you?

Chapter 8

Your Final Career Plan

Learning Objectives

These activities are designed to assist participants in successfully completing the transition-to-work process. Completing the activities and journaling questions in this chapter will allow you to:

- Develop a final career plan, complete with goals, skills gaps to reach these goals, and strategies for implementing your transition to work.

My Final Career Plan

To the Instructor: For your participants to make a successful transition to work, they will need a final career plan. Career plans help them to:

- Stay on the right career track.
- Maintain a specific career direction.
- Ensure they can clearly see a path to the future.
- Provide insight into your strengths as well as the areas where you may need to fill skills gaps.
- Remain motivated despite obstacles and setbacks.

Activity: My Final Career Plan

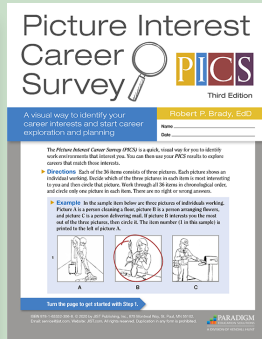
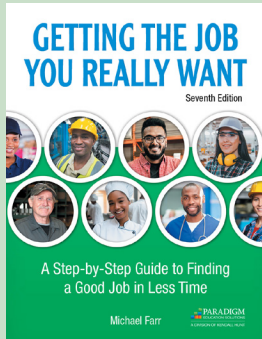
Tell participants to use the following model to outline jobs, educational experiences, and gigs that can help them progress toward their ultimate career goals and objectives. Then identify skills gaps and strategies to fill these gaps.

Have participants share their final career plans with each other.

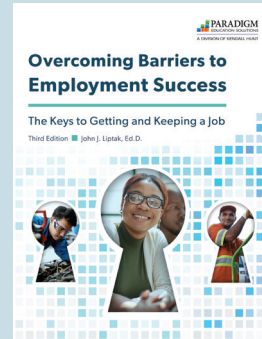
My Career Plan

My Goals	Skills Gap to Reaching My Goals	My Transition Strategies

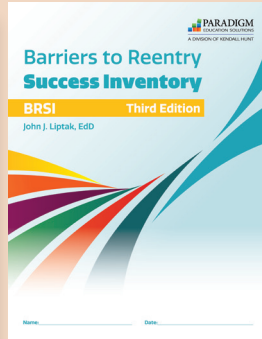
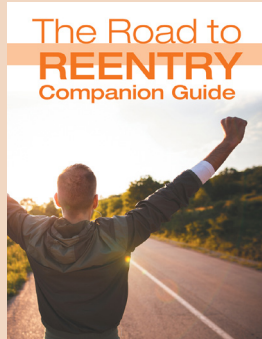
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