

Succeeding in the world of work

Living without welfare

You did it! You now have a job. You can succeed. And this job can lead to better and better ones. Here are some tips on how to get there.

Doing well at work

In any job, you must perform to earn your pay. You are more likely to be successful at work, however, if you enjoy your job and try your best. Here are some hints for succeeding at work:

- **Be dependable**
 - Always arrive on time.
 - Call your boss if you can't come in.
 - Schedule appointments outside of work hours.
 - Arrange for time off ahead of time.
- **Do good work**
 - Do the day's work for the day's pay.
 - Limit personal phone calls and non-work conversations.
 - Take lunch and rest breaks at scheduled times.
 - Be responsible—treat equipment and supplies as if you had to pay for them yourself.
- **Look your best**
 - You represent the company to customers and clients—dress accordingly.
 - When in doubt about how to dress, ASK!
- **Learn all you can about your job**
 - Ask for help from other employees or your supervisor when you need it.
 - Ask about training programs that will help improve your skills.
 - Be a leader. Help new employees and set a good example for other workers.
 - Discuss your career goals with your supervisor. Ask for suggestions.



• **Keep a positive attitude**

- Always be willing to learn new tasks to improve your job skills.
- If you think that something needs to be done, ask if you can do it.
- Be polite to your coworkers, supervisors, and customers.
- If you have problems with a coworker or customer, immediately discuss the situation with your supervisor.
- If you are criticized, listen for any helpful suggestions and ignore any personal remarks.



Following these guidelines can improve your performance and possibly your position. Don't give up if it doesn't seem to work at first. A job is meant to work out over the long haul, so go ahead and try your best!

Managing work and home life

Balancing the demands of work, family, and personal needs takes practice. It's tough for everyone. But you can learn how to manage your time as well as anyone. Here are problems that all of us have to deal with from time to time, and some ideas on how to manage them:

• **Money**

- Make a monthly budget of all your expenses to figure out where your money is being spent.
- Talk to a welfare counselor about Medicaid and other benefits you may still qualify for.
- Find out if you qualify for the Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC).



• **Child care**

- Ask friends or family members to care for your children.
- Find a safe, affordable, and convenient childcare center.
- Consider transportation when arranging for childcare.
- Plan for emergencies—the baby-sitter getting sick or school closing because of bad weather.



- **Transportation**

- Plan ahead. Expect delays and allow plenty of time for traveling to the job.
- Get a copy of the bus and subway schedules in your area.
- Ask about carpools or vanpools.
- See if transportation subsidies are available.
- Identify people who might be able to give you a ride in an emergency.



- **Health**

- Miss work only when you are truly sick.
- When you are sick, inform your boss as soon as you can so he or she can cover your position.
- Try to schedule doctor or any other medical appointments outside working hours.



All of these problems can cause anxiety and frustration, but that doesn't mean you can't work. If a job does become too stressful for you to manage yourself, call a job counselor at your job service office to discuss the possibility of finding a new job.

Before you quit your job, make sure you have another one lined up or you know that you can pay your bills while you are looking! Always give your employer 2 weeks' notice after you have found another job.

Finding a better job

If your current job doesn't lead to promotions or increased pay, you may want to start looking for a another job. Higher pay, better work, and working closer to home are all good reasons to switch jobs. Regardless of your job goals, you should work toward passing the General Educational Development (GED) tests if you don't have your high school diploma. If English is your second language, you should take classes in English as a Second Language (ESL) to improve your communication skills.

- **Changing jobs**

- Ask about training programs that might prepare you for a different job with the same company.
- If there are no opportunities when you are ready to move up, look for jobs in other companies.
- Don't limit your search to the jobs you already know about. There are many jobs out there that you may not have had time to explore when you first started looking.
- Learn about many different occupations.



The *Occupational Outlook Handbook* has information about hundreds of occupations. Your job service office or a library should have a copy.

• **Where to look for a new job**

- Ask for advice from a job counselor at your local job service office or One-Stop-Career Center.
- Ask family, friends, work contacts and neighbors if they know of any job openings.
- Check the classified ads section in your local newspaper for current employment listings.



• **Education and training**

- More education and training usually lead to better jobs and higher pay.
- There are many occupations you can learn on the job by watching experienced workers or by combining classroom training and on-the-job experience.
- Other occupations you may be interested in—car mechanic, computer programmer, dental hygienist—require formal vocational or academic training above and beyond high school.
- Check with your job counselor to see if you can get financial aid for training or vocational schools.
- Ask if your employer will help pay for some courses.



These are some jobs that let you earn while you learn:

• **Jobs helping people**

- Child care workers
- Teacher aides
- Nursing aides and orderlies
- Home health aides
- Correction officers



• **Driving/Outdoor jobs**

- Truck drivers
- Postal mail carriers
- Firefighters
- School bus drivers
- Landscaping and lawn service workers

• **Office jobs**

- General office clerks
- Receptionists
- Medical assistants
- Dental assistants
- Bank tellers

• **Jobs dealing with people**

- Cashiers
- Retail sales workers
- Waiters and waitresses
- Police officers
- Driver/sales workers

• **Construction/Repair jobs**

- Construction trades helpers
- House painters
- Carpenters
- Electricians
- Plumbers

