# Career Planning Toolkit

*A Facilitator's Guide to Supporting Youth with Disabilities through the Career Planning Process*

Center on transition innovations VCU

Developed by the Center on Transition Innovations

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# Acknowledgments

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For further information about the Center on Transition Innovations, please visit our website at CenterOnTransition.org.

# About this Toolkit

The Career Planning Toolkit is a resource for educators and counselors supporting students with significant disabilities through the career planning process. The toolkit uses hands-on activities to help students plan for their careers as they prepare for a successful transition to postsecondary education or employment. The toolkit is a companion resource for the Center on Transition Innovations' *Get Ready for Your Career* course.

## Get Ready for Your Career

The Center on Transition Innovations developed a free, online course, *Get Ready for Your Career* (centerontransition.org/training/getready-career.cfm), to guide students through career planning. The course uses engaging educational videos and online activities. At the end of the course, students have the knowledge and the tools needed to find the career that's right for them.

The goal of this toolkit is the same as the course: to assist students through the career planning process. We have adapted the course information and materials to be used in a hands-on way. The toolkit consists of effective assessments, instructional practices, resources, and activities to engage students who have extensive support needs, their families, and service providers in career planning and development.

## Benefits of Career Planning

A critical component of post-school career success is career planning while in school. Career planning is a process that helps all students select careers that match their skills, interests, and strengths. It is the process of uncovering strengths, preferences, interests, and needs; exploring career pathways; establishing career goals; and developing plans to gain the education and experiences needed to reach career goals.

Career planning goes hand in hand with good transition planning. This process should start early and drive many of the transition plans and goals. Intentional career planning leads to informed, student-selected, and interest-driven career goals. It also can aid in effective academic and career planning.

# How to Use this Toolkit

The toolkit can be used as a companion resource to the *Get Ready for Your Career* self-paced course or on its own. Base this decision on the needs of each student. When used as a companion to the course, we recommend that students view the videos before engaging in the lessons. It is important to start at the beginning of the toolkit and move through each section in order. The toolkit follows the logical order of career planning. Completing the sections out of order may not produce the desired results.

## Section Order

1. Finding a Career Begins with You
2. Explore and Research
3. Explore Paths, Create Goals, and Plan
4. Prepare for Success

## Direction for each section

1. Read through each lesson before implementing lessons. This allows you to have the basic knowledge needed to teach the content and activities.
2. Review the menu of activities provided in the section. Work with the student to select the most appropriate activities. This could be one or all activities. Most of the activities will need some pre-planning and preparation time.
3. Have the student view videos within *Get Ready for Your Career* (optional).
4. Engage in activities selected from each lesson.
5. Add information gathered from lesson activities to the portfolio at the end of this toolkit (page 82).
6. Help students share what they learned and their plans during IEP meetings and with other important stakeholders.

## Lesson 1

# Finding a Career Begins with You

Welcome to the first lesson in the toolkit: Finding a Career Begins with You. This lesson focuses on the first step in career planning: building self-determination skills and getting to know yourself. In this lesson, you will support the student in becoming a self-determined career planner, learn more about what makes them unique, and help the student to connect their strengths, interests, needs, and passions to opportunities.

Let's look at what we mean by "finding a career begins with you." A job is work that you do to make money, but a career is something more. A career is what you spend your life doing. A career is something you have to take the initiative to work towards. It is important that your career matches your strengths, preferences, interests, and needs. So to find that career that fits best, you must first take control and discover who you are and what you enjoy.

## Lesson 1 Overview

To help students complete this step of career planning, Lesson 1 targets two skills: self-determination and getting to know yourself. We recommend that you move through the lesson in order, beginning with Skill A: Self-Determination. You can do all the activities in that skill area or choose ones that best meet the needs of your student. Next, add the information gathered from the activity into the student's portfolio. Then move on to Skill B: Getting to Know Yourself activities, and add the information gathered into the portfolio.

**Skill A: Self-Determination**

Making decisions, advocating, setting goals for the future, and becoming more self-aware.

**Activity 1: How Self-Determined Am I?**

**Activity 2: Goal Setting**

**Activity 3: What's Important to Me?**

**Skill B: Getting to Know Yourself**

Learning about your strengths, preferences, interests, and needs and how those can connect to a career.

**Activity 1: Who Do You Think I Am?**

**Activity 2: What's My SPIN?**

**Activity 3: My One-Pager**

# Skill A: Self-Determination

Finding the right career and creating the life that you want doesn't just happen; it takes becoming self-determined. People who are self-determined believe in themselves and make their own decisions. They also set goals, problem solve, and take action. Self-determined people ask questions and speak up for their rights.

## Why is Self-Determination Important?

Planning for a career that is student-directed and interest-driven cannot be done without self-determination skills. To plan for a career, students will need to make decisions, advocate for themselves, set goals, and become more self-aware. Without self-determination skills, the student may end up with a career that someone else wants for them and not a career they want for themselves. Would you be motivated to work in a career that you weren't interested in? Probably not!

## Self-Determination Defined

Self-determination means making your own decisions and telling other people about those decisions. When students are self-determined, they are in the driver's seat, set goals for their life, and work with other people to meet those goals. Sometimes, a person may need help. Being self-determined does not mean that we never need help! However, it does mean that if you need help, you know how to ask for it.

## Self-Determination Activities

The following activities will help students develop the self-determination skills needed to lead their career planning journey. Complete all the activities or select the ones that best fit the needs of your student. At the end of each activity, add the information gathered from the activity into the student's portfolios.

**Don't forget to check out the videos under Lesson 1 of CTI's *Get Ready for Your Career* course before you get started with the activities!**

### Activity 1: How Self-Determined Am I?

**Objective:** This activity will introduce and assess self-determination skills.

**Portfolio:** Students will identify three self-determination skills that are strengths and three skills that need improvement.

### Activity 2: Goal Setting

**Objective:** This activity will help your student understand the importance of setting goals and how it relates to career planning.

**Portfolio:** Students will set three SMART goals.

### Activity 3: What's Important to Me?

**Objective:** This activity will help your student identify important activities, people, and things.

**Portfolio:** Students will identify the three most important things in their lives.

# Self-Determination Activity 1: How Self-Determined Am I?

This is an introductory activity that provides the student with a chance to learn more about self-determination and their current level of self-determination skills.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will gain knowledge on the concept of self-determination.
- Students will assess their current level of self-determination skills.
- Students will identify three self-determination skills that are strengths and three skills that need improvement.

## Activity Materials

- Elements of I'm Determined (imdetermined.org/resource/elements-of-im-determined)
- Self-Determination Student Checklist (imdetermined.org/resource/self-determination-checklist-student)
- Two different color highlighters
- Portfolio: Self-Determination Skills (page 82)

## Activity Procedures

### Getting Students Ready

1. Ask students, **"Who do you think should be the most important person in making decisions, solving problems, and setting goals for you?"**
2. After hearing the responses, remind the student that, **"You are the most important person when it comes to making choices, solving problems, and setting goals for yourself. In order to do that, you need self-determination skills."**
3. Explain that, **"Self-determination means taking control of your life, making your own decisions, and advocating for what you want and need. Self-determination is very important to getting the type of career you want."**
4. Use the Elements of I'm Determined to help you explain the different components of self-determination.

## Activity Instructions

5. Tell your student that the first step in building self-determination is to understand their current skills.
6. Complete the Self-Determination Checklist together.

   **TIP:** If your student struggles with the number scales, try thumbs up or down, smiling or frowning faces, or colors to indicate their current level of self-determination for each statement.

7. After the assessment is completed, highlight each statement that is rated a 3. This will show the student where they are really strong! Next, highlight the statements rated 1 with a different color. This will show the student where they need to build skills.
8. Update Portfolio: Self-Determination Skills.

   Fill in the information with the student's top three self-determination strengths and three self-determination skills that the student needs to work on.

## Closure

9. Tell the student to think about these skills and to identify which ones they really want to focus on. It is important to talk to their teachers and families about which self-determination skills they are really good at and which skills need some work.

# Self-Determination Activity 2: Goal Setting

Setting goals is an important part of self-determination and career planning. This activity will help your student practice how to set and achieve goals.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will recognize the importance of setting goals and how it relates to career planning.
- Students will set three SMART goals.

## Activity Materials

- Worksheets: Goal Setting (pages 11-13)
- Portfolio: Career-Related Goals (page 83)

## Activity Procedures

### Getting Students Ready

1. Ask the student, **"What was the last goal you set?"** Help students think about what goals they have set before. This can be academic, social, career, or personal goals.
2. Share that goals are something we want to achieve and something that takes action to reach. Goals are important to reaching our desired careers.

### Activity Instructions

3. Explain that, **"Without goals, what we want is just a dream. Goals are what helps us achieve the things we want. If you want to achieve a career then you need to set goals to get there."**
4. Demonstrate that a SMART goal includes:
    - Specifically stating the goal and why it is important
    - Outlining how you will measure or track your progress
    - Setting a due date to achieve the goal
    - Describing the specific steps you will take to achieve your goal

5. Make up a goal with your student to practice this process.
6. Use the Goal Setting worksheets to help your students set three goals (at home, at school, and in the community).

   **TIP**: Use the Self-Determination Checklist from the previous lesson, their IEP, or recent challenges to set meaningful goals. Encourage students to set goals geared towards career development.

7. Update Portfolio: Career-Related Goals.

   Fill in the information with the career-related goals the student will work on to plan for the future.

## Closure

8. Remind your student, **"Goals are only achievable if we are committed to taking action."** Encourage students to monitor their progress weekly with family, teachers, and others that are helping them to achieve their goals.

# Goal Setting Worksheets
# Goal #1: At Home

| My goal is to: |
| --- |
| |
| **This goal is important because:** |
| |
| **I will know I have finished this goal when:** |
| |
| **I think I can finish this goal by this day:** |
| |
| **Steps I will take to meet this goal:** |
| |

## Goal #2: At School

| My goal is to: |
| --- |
| |
| **This goal is important because:** |
| |
| **I will know I have finished this goal when:** |
| |
| **I think I can finish this goal by this day:** |
| |
| **Steps I will take to meet this goal:** |
| |

## Goal #3: In the Community

| My goal is to: |
| --- |
| |
| **This goal is important because:** |
| |
| **I will know I have finished this goal when:** |
| |
| **I think I can finish this goal by this day:** |
| |
| **Steps I will take to meet this goal:** |
| |

# Self-Determination Activity 3: What's Important to Me?

Self-determination is about identifying your values and making choices in support of those values. Students need both skills to be successful. This activity will help students show you and others what is important to them.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will identify what is important to them.
- Students will express to others the things they value.
- Students will pick the top three things that are important to them.

## Activity Materials

- Materials to record things that interest the student (for example: camera, phone, tablet, drawing materials, etc.)
- Portfolio: My Top Three Things (page 83)

## Activity Procedures

### Getting Students Ready

1. Tell the students, **"We all have things that are important to us. For example, _____ is important to me."** Explain that knowing what is important to them is helpful to self-determination and career planning.

### Activity Instructions

2. Tell the students that, **"Today you will be capturing items that are important to you."** These could be: physical items, activities, routines, or people.

3. Help them start to think about what items are important to them.

   **TIP:** It is important to keep the student-centered nature of self-determination in mind when supporting your student in these activities. Your student may require support in the form of prompting, and that is fine! However, take care to avoid prompts which directly supply answers to your student about what is important to them. Use prompts in the form of alternative, simpler questions, like "what kinds of things do you think about a lot?" rather than providing suggestions about what is important to your student.

4. Have students select and capture things that are important to them. Here are some examples of how they could do this:
   - Take pictures with a cell phone or other device.
   - Make a written list of these important things when they find them.
   - Draw pictures of these important items.

6. Regardless of what method your student chooses, the goal is for them to visually document what is important to them. Have them write simple labels for these visual descriptions. Encourage your student to get comfortable talking about their interests, with these visuals as a supplemental aid! Make connections to careers, clubs, classes, or other experiences that could align with those important to items.

7. Update Portfolio: My Top Three Things.

   Have the student rank the top three most important items that they captured and include the information in the portfolio.

## Closure

8. Wrap up the activity by stating, **"It is important to know what is important to us and to tell others about these things so that they can help us make decisions about classes, careers,and activities."** Encourage students to share these important things with their families and at their next IEP meeting. You can even help them create a short presentation!

# Skill B: Getting to Know Yourself

In order to take a person-centered approach to planning for the right career, your student must start with a sense of who they are as a person. In this lesson, we will focus on four aspects of self-assessment: strengths, preferences, interests, and needs (SPIN). This will set a solid foundation for the career planning process.

## Why is Getting to Know Yourself Important?

It is important to plan a career based on who you are. A career should be something that you like to do, and that you are good at. To plan for a satisfying career, the first thing you need to do is figure out what you're good at, what you like and don't like, and what kinds of things you need help with.

## Getting to Know Yourself Defined

Getting to know yourself, also known as self-awareness, is the ability to see yourself for who you are. It involves learning about your strengths, interests, likes, dislikes, and needs. This information is essential in helping you make decisions about your future career.

## Getting to Know Yourself Activities

The following activities will help students develop a sense of self-awareness. Complete all the activities or select the ones that best fit the needs of your student. At the end of each activity, add the information gathered from the activity into the student's portfolio.

**Don't forget to check out the videos under Lesson 1 of CTI's *Get Ready for Your Career* course before you get started with the activities!**

### Activity 1: Who Do You Think I Am?

**Objective:** This activity will provide the opportunity for students to interview others about their strengths, preferences, interests, and needs.

**Portfolio:** Students will gather information from others on their SPIN.

### Activity 2: What's My SPIN?

**Objective:** This activity will provide the opportunity for students to describe their SPIN and identify parts of their SPIN that can support their career planning.

**Portfolio:** Students will gather information and complete student's SPIN.

### Activity 3: My One-Pager

**Objective:** This activity will have your student make a One-Pager – a document that summarizes their SPIN.

**Portfolio:** Students will complete a One-Pager.

# Getting to Know Yourself Activity 1: Who Do You Think I Am?

It can be hard to get to know ourselves. Self-reflection is a skill that involves practice. The good thing is that there are people in our lives who can provide information that helps us to get to know ourselves. This activity provides the opportunity for your student to go into their school, home, and community and ask others about their SPIN.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will gather information about their SPIN through interviews.
- Students will reflect on what they learned from others about their SPIN.
- Students will record agreed upon SPIN information they gathered from others.

## Activity Materials

- Worksheet: My SPIN Interview (pages 19-20)
- A device or materials to record the list of people to interview (for example, paper/pen, iPad, computer)
- Portfolio: My SPIN (page 84)

## Activity Procedures

### Getting Students Ready

1. Tell your student that, **"Other people in our lives can help us figure out what we are good at, where we need to improve, and our likes and dislikes."**

2. Share a story of how someone in your life helped you learn more about yourself and how that helped you figure out what careers might be a good fit.

   For example, when I was younger, I had a teacher tell me I was a good listener, cared about others' feelings, and was a strong problem solver. These are all strengths that fit well with my career as a counselor.

3. Ask your student, **"Who in your life knows you well and could help you figure out your strengths, likes and dislikes, interests, and needs?"**

   Encourage students to choose a variety of people in their lives. These could be peers, teachers or support staff, family, and people in their community.

4. Record the names and roles of each person your student identifies. This list will be used during the main activity to help select people to interview.
   - This list will be used during the main activity to help select people to interview.

## Activity Instructions

5. Explain to your student that they are going to interview three to five different people in their lives to help them learn more about themselves. Use the list from step 4 that the student created to select which people the student would like to interview.

6. Review the questions on the My SPIN Interview worksheet.

   This worksheet will provide your student with a set of questions to ask people in their lives questions about their personal qualities, strengths, interests, and support needs. Feel free to change questions with your student's input to better align with comfort level and needed information.

   **TIP:** Depending on your student, it might be helpful to role play the interview so that they can practice. You might even attend the interviews in-person or through video conferencing.

7. Print the interview form and have your student bring it with them when they go to interview people in their lives.

   **TIP:** Depending on your student, you can help them email or set up meetings with the different people they are assigned to interview.

   **TIP:** The student can capture the answers by writing them down, drawing pictures, or through video or voice recording.

8. Once the interviews are completed, go over the answers with your student. Encourage them to think about what they learned by asking:
   - What do they agree or disagree with?
   - What would they change?
   - What are they most proud of?
   - Did anything stand out that could help in selecting a career?

9. Update Portfolio: My SPIN.

   Fill in the information gathered to complete the student's SPIN.

## Closure

10. Encourage your student to continue to ask people in their lives these questions, including at their next IEP meeting.

## My SPIN Interview

### Who I am talking to today:

| What kinds of things do you see me get excited about? |
| --- |
| |
| **What kinds of things do you notice I avoid or dislike?** |
| |
| **What is something you think I'm really good at doing?** |
| |

**What is something that may not be as easy for me as it is for others?**

**What are some things you help me with? How do you help me?**

**What is the first thing you'd tell someone you just met about me?**

**What is something you wish I knew about myself?**

# Getting to Know Yourself Activity 2: What's My SPIN?

In this activity, you will work with your student to identify some of their strengths, preferences, interests, and needs (SPIN). Students will be able to use the information they learn in this exercise to inform their career choices.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will describe their SPIN.
- Students will identify parts of their SPIN that can support their career planning.

## Activity Materials

- Worksheet: SPIN (page 23)
- Portfolio: My SPIN (page 84)

## Activity Procedures

### Getting Students Ready

1. Before you begin the main activity, explain and define each letter in SPIN.

   **Strengths:** These are talents and abilities. These are the things that you do well at home, school, and even in your community.

   Examples: I am organized, I am good with animals, I can use a lot of power tools.

   **Preferences:** These are your likes and dislikes, what you want your environment to be like, or how you prefer people to act towards you.

   Examples: I prefer to work in teams, I prefer to work in quiet environments, I prefer to be close to home, I prefer being hot than cold.

   **Interests:** This is what you are passionate about, both in and out of school/work. These are the activities, hobbies, and things you enjoy most.

   Examples: I like playing sports, I like rap music, I like gardening and being outdoors.

   **Needs:** These are areas where you need support from others. What do you need help with? What is the best way to receive that help?

   Examples: I need my tasks broken down into many small steps, I need picture instructions and reminders, I need extra time to complete my work, I need help lifting heavy objects.

## Activity Instructions

2. Have your student complete the SPIN worksheet. Help them think about answers in terms of home, school, and community. Students can write, draw, show, or verbalize the answers.
3. Have your student circle the answers they think might be helpful when planning their career.
4. Update Portfolio: My SPIN.

   Fill in the information gathered to complete the student's SPIN.

## Closure

5. Wrap up by saying, **"You want a career that aligns with your SPIN. Understanding your strengths, preferences, interests, and needs is really the first step in planning your career. Remember, your SPIN can change as you learn, grow, and experience new things."** Encourage them to continue to reflect and think about their SPIN.

# SPIN Worksheet

**Strengths: What I'm good at, the things I do really well**

*What are some nice things people say about me?*

**Preferences: The way I like things to be, the way I like to do things**

*How do I do things at home? What is my room like?*

**Interests: What I like, what I get excited about**

*What are some things I think about a lot? What do I do in my free time?*

**Needs: Things that I need help with**

*What is hard for me? What do I dislike? How do people help me?*

# Getting to Know Yourself Activity 3: My One-Pager

We will bring everything your student has learned together to create an important piece of their portfolio: their One-Pager. A One-Pager is a document they can use to communicate with collaborators in their lives - employers, educators, and supports - about who they are. It can showcase the most important aspects of their SPIN to people they want or need to work with, and it can be a critical first step along the road to advocacy.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will develop a One-Pager using their SPIN information.

## Activity Materials

- I'm Determined One-Pager (imdetermined.org/resource/one-pager)
- Portfolio: One-Pager (page 84)

## Activity Procedures

### Getting Students Ready

1. Ask your student, **"How can others get to know you and your strengths, preferences, interests, and needs?"** Explain that one way this can be done is through a One-Pager. A One-Pager is a snapshot of your strengths, preferences, interests, and needs.

### Activity Instructions

2. Write out a list of your student's strengths, preferences, interests, and needs (SPIN).

   Use the information gathered during the previous activities or ask some of the questions below:

   - What do you like most about yourself?
   - What subject in school are you best at?
   - What are some things you feel like you are really good at?
   - What kinds of things do you get excited about?
   - What do you do in your free time outside of work or school?
   - What kinds of books, music, or television do you like?
   - What is your favorite subject in school?
   - What kinds of technology do you use at home?
   - What makes school easier for you?
   - How do you keep your room at home?
   - What kinds of things help you study?
   - How do you like your teachers to talk to you?
   - What are some things your family does that help you?
   - What are some things you don't like?
   - What are some things that are harder for you?
   - What helps you deal with things that are harder?

3. Put the information you gather into the four SPIN categories.
4. Develop the One-Pager using the information.
5. You can use I'm Determined One-Pager or develop something on your own.

   The goal of the One-Pager is to summarize your student's strengths, preferences, interests, and support needs. Just like in the previous activities, we will look to emphasize strengths and interests first.

   **TIP:** It is important that major support needs are respectfully identified in this document so others know how to best support the student. Allow your student to describe these support needs to the best of their ability, and respect the language they use.
6. Update Portfolio: One-Pager.

   Upload or copy and paste the student's One-Pager in the portfolio.

### Closure

7. Wrap up by identifying who in the student's life should get a copy of the One-Pager. Find ways for your student to present the knowledge they have gained on strengths, preferences, interests, and needs during meetings and work-based learning opportunities.

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## Additional Ideas for Finding a Career Begins with Your Skill Development

Remember, career planning is a continuous process. The activities described in the lessons are designed to provide students with a jump start, but work doesn't stop here. To continue to develop these skills, check out some of these additional resources and activities found in the course *Get Ready for Your Career*.

## Lesson 2

# Explore and Research

Welcome to Lesson 2: Explore and Research. This lesson focuses on the second step of career planning: exploring careers through research and work-based learning opportunities. In this lesson, you will support your students to make connections between the information they learned about themselves in Lesson 1 and their career options. Students will explore careers through research and experiences like informational interviews and job shadows.

Before we introduce the activities, let's look at what we mean by *explore and research*. Helping students to learn what they are good at, what they enjoy, and what's important to them are the first steps in career planning. The next steps are to determine what careers are in demand and which ones match students' interests, skills, and strengths.

## Lesson Overview

To gain knowledge of possible career options, students must explore and research careers. This step of the career planning process increases awareness of options and clarifies the options that are the best fit for the student.

To help students complete this step of career planning, Lesson 2 will target two skills: career exploration and work-based learning. We recommend that you move through the lesson in order beginning with Skill A: Career Exploration. You can do all the activities in that skill area or choose ones that best meet the needs of your student. Next, add the information you gathered into the student's portfolio. Then move onto Skill B: Work-Based Learning activities and add the information gathered into the portfolio.

**Skill A: Career Exploration**

Exploring career clusters and discovering careers that align with strengths, preferences, interests, and needs.

**Activity 1: What are Career Clusters?**

**Activity 2: What Career Clusters Interest Me?**

**Activity 3: Exploring Career Clusters**

**Skill B: Work-Based Learning**

Engaging in workplace experiences with businesses that align with career interests.

**Activity 1: Informational Interviews**

**Activity 2: Exploring through a Workplace Tour**

**Activity 3: Learning about a Job through Job Shadowing**

# Skill A: Career Exploration

How do we know what careers align with our strengths and interests? It takes exploring and researching a variety of career options. Career exploration leads students to make informed career planning decisions.

## Why is Career Exploration Important?

Making uninformed career-related decisions leads to selecting the wrong career. Increasing knowledge of careers helps narrow down potential career options (there are a lot of careers out there!) that align with preferences and skills. Planning for a career without exploring and researching is like throwing a dart with your eyes closed hoping to hit your target.

## Career Exploration Defined

Career exploration involves discovering career options and identifying the route to pursue them. Start by examining career clusters. Then figure out which clusters connect to strengths, skills, and qualities. Career exploration is an engaging process where the student seeks out information such as labor market trends, vocational interests, and pathways.

## Career Exploration Activities

The following activities can help students explore careers and career clusters. Complete all of the activities or select the ones that best fit the needs of your student. At the end of each activity, add the information gathered from the activity to the student's portfolio.

**Don't forget to check out the videos under Lesson 2 of CTI's *Get Ready for Your Career* course before you get started with the activities!**

### Activity 1: What are Career Clusters?

**Objective:** This activity will expose students to Virginia's 17 career clusters.

**Portfolio:** This is an introductory activity with no portfolio outcome.

### Activity 2: What Career Clusters Interest Me?

**Objective:** This activity will allow your student to identity career clusters of interest.

**Portfolio:** Students will identify their top three career clusters.

### Activity 3: Exploring Career Clusters

**Objective:** This activity will provide the opportunity for students to learn more about their top three career clusters.

**Portfolio:** Students will gather information on their top career cluster.

# Career Exploration Activity 1: What are Career Clusters?

This is an introduction to Virginia's 17 career clusters. In this activity, students will explore career clusters and identify jobs within each cluster.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will gain awareness of Virginia's 17 career clusters.
- Students will develop a list of people they know who work within each career cluster.

## Activity Materials

- CTI's Exploring Virginia's Career Clusters (PDF) (bit.ly/va-career-clusters)
- CareerOneStop's Career Cluster series (bit.ly/career-one-stop-career-clusters)

## Activity Procedures

### Getting Students Ready

1. Say, **"There are many different types of careers that you can have. We need to learn about different types of careers to know which one is a match for us! One way to learn about careers is to learn about career clusters. Did you know that we put similar types of careers into groups or clusters?"**

2. Provide your student with an example of a career cluster.

   For example, you might say that there is a career cluster called Education and Training. Within this cluster, you have jobs like teachers, librarians, daycare workers, and counselors. Each career within this cluster provides some type of education and training to others.

### Activity Instructions

3. Cut the Exploring Virginia's Career Clusters document into 17 individual sheets with one career cluster per sheet.

   Explain, **"Today we are going to learn about the 17 career clusters we have in Virginia."**

4. One at a time, go through each career cluster. For each cluster:
    - Name the career cluster.
    - Watch the corresponding video from CareerOneStop's Career Cluster series.
    - Identify different careers within the cluster.
    - Together, identify one person the student knows (family, friend, community member, or school personnel) who works within the cluster.
    - Write the name and job title of the known person on the back of the slip of paper.
5. After going through all the career clusters, check for understanding. Describe a career cluster and have the student identify it. Repeat.

## Closure

6. Tell your student, **"You are on your way to selecting a career path now that you know about career clusters."** Remind your student that career clusters are how we group similar careers. Exploring the different clusters is a part of career planning. Encourage students to continue to explore and learn by going home and talking to family members about career clusters.

# Career Exploration Activity 2: What Career Clusters Interest Me?

This activity provides the opportunity to identify career clusters that interest students the most.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will identify their top three career clusters of interest.
- Students will describe how each career cluster aligns with their strengths and interests.

## Activity Materials

- CTI's Exploring Virginia's Career Clusters (PDF) – cut into individual career clusters (bit.ly/va-career-clusters)
- Worksheet: My Top Three Career Clusters (page 31)
- Portfolio: My Top Three Career Clusters (page 85)

## Activity Procedures

### Getting Students Ready

1. Use Exploring Virginia's Career Clusters to review the 17 career clusters.
2. Say, **"There will be some career clusters that you like and some that you do not like. Pay attention to this as we go over each cluster."**

### Activity Instructions

3. Explain, **"An important part of selecting the right career is narrowing down which career cluster interests you the most."**
4. Lay out the 17 career cluster slips of paper. Have the student rank or pick out the three clusters that interest them the most.

   **TIP:** If the student does better with limited choices, offer a few at a time and pick each favorite. Then go through and have the student pick from the favorites until only three remain.
5. Once your student selects their top three, complete the My Top Three Career Clusters worksheet.
6. Update Portfolio: My Top Three Career Clusters.

   Now that the student has completed the activity, fill in the information with their top three career clusters.

### Closure

7. Remind your student that their top choices should match their strengths and interests. Highlight how their choices align with their strengths and interests. Encourage students to share their top three career clusters with family, teachers, and their IEP team.

# My Top Three Career Clusters

| Career Cluster | My strengths that will help me be successful working in this cluster | Jobs I want to find out more about in this cluster | What I like about the jobs in this cluster |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | | |
| 2. | | | |
| 3. | | | |

# Career Exploration Activity 3: Exploring Career Clusters

This activity helps students learn about specific career clusters that interest them.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will gain knowledge on how to search for information on careers.
- Students will identify information that is important in selecting a career.
- Students will select the career cluster that most aligns with their interests and needs.

## Activity Materials

- Device (computer, tablet) to search for information
- Career Clusters on VA Wizard (bit.ly/va-wizard-career-cluster)
- Worksheet: My Career Clusters Information (page 34)
- Portfolio: My Top Career Cluster (page 85)

## Activity Procedures

### Getting Students Ready

1. Ask, **"What are some ways that we decide that we want to try something like a hobby, movie, video game, or experience?"**
2. Explain, **"The first step in deciding to try something is to research it. If you are deciding to watch a movie you might look online to see what it is about, watch a trailer, and read the reviews. If you want to go skydiving, you might research companies that do skydiving trips, try a skydiving simulator, and figure out the cost. The same goes for planning a career. You don't select a career without researching it."**
3. Have the student select two to three career clusters of interest to research.

   **TIP:** Use career clusters identified in the previous lesson.

### Activity Instructions

4. Have your student research information on the selected career clusters using VA Wizard.
5. Complete the My Career Cluster Information worksheet with the following information:
   - Examples of jobs within that cluster
   - Projected labor market growth
   - Types of skills and education required
   - Typical salary for the career cluster

6. Review the information gathered for each cluster.
7. Have the student select their top career cluster from the two to three previously selected.
8. Update Portfolio: My Top Career Cluster.

   Now that the student has completed the activity, fill in the information with the student's top career cluster and the information gathered on that cluster.

## Closure

9. Review how to research careers, and reinforce how they picked their top choice. Encourage students to share their top choice with their IEP team.

# My Career Clusters Information

| Career Cluster | Examples of Jobs | Projected Labor Market Growth | Skills and Education Needed | Typical Salary Range |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | | | | |
| 2. | | | | |
| 3. | | | | |

**My top career cluster is:** _____

# Skill B: Work-Based Learning

The best way to learn is by doing. Work-based learning is a perfect way to learn by engaging with businesses. By getting students involved in different experiences, they can start to narrow down what they want to do when they graduate. Work-based learning provides opportunities for students to dig deeper and gather important information that will help in planning for the right career.

## Why is Work-Based Learning Important?

Work-based learning helps students connect knowledge gained from school to real work in the community. Students can then continue to build preferences based on hands-on experiences. These preferences will help a student determine which career to pursue.

## Work-Based Learning Defined

Work-based learning allows students to discover more about careers from employers and businesses. This includes attending career fairs, touring workplaces, conducting informational interviews, job shadowing, and participating in internships. These experiences happen beyond paper and pencil classroom activities. It is an engaging approach to researching careers and will provide your student with valuable information needed to select the right career.

## Work-Based Learning Activities

The following activities provide students the opportunity to explore and research through work-based learning activities. Complete all of the activities or select the ones that best fit the needs of your student. At the end of each activity, add the information gathered from the activity to the student's portfolio.

**Don't forget to check out the videos under Lesson 2 of CTI's *Get Ready for Your Career* course before you get started with the activities!**

### Activity 1: Informational Interviews

**Objective:** This activity will provide the opportunity to learn more about a career through informational interviews.

**Portfolio:** Students will identified their career of interest and the characteristics of a job within that career.

### Activity 2: Exploring through a Workplace Tour

**Objective:** This activity will have your student complete a workplace tour.

**Portfolio:** Students will identify positive aspects of the business and various jobs.

### Activity 3: Learning about a Job through Job Shadowing

**Objective:** This activity will have students shadow an employee.

**Portfolio:** Students will identify information on what they liked about each job.

# Work-Based Learning Activity 1: Informational Interviews

This activity helps students learn more about a career by engaging in informational interviews.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will identify three people in their lives to interview.
- Students will reflect on what they learned from each informational interview.
- Students will select the career that interested them the most from the interviews.

## Activity Materials

- Worksheet: Completed My Career Clusters Information (page 34)
- Worksheet: Informational Interview Questionnaire (page 38)
- Portfolio: My Informational Interview (page 86)

## Activity Procedures

> Note: this activity will take place over several days/meetings. Complete the ***Getting Students Ready*** section first, then work through the Activity Instructions after the informational interview is set up.

### Getting Students Ready

1. Ask, **"How do employers decide if you are the right fit for a position?"**
2. Respond, **"One way is through an interview. Employers interview you to see if you are the right fit. Did you know that you can also interview them? Informational interviews are a great way to learn about a company and career."**

   **TIP:** Use the My Career Clusters Information worksheet from the previous activities to remind students of their top three career clusters.
3. Together, pick one person they (or you) know to interview within those three career clusters.
4. Contact the selected person to request and schedule an informational interview. The interview can be in-person or virtual.

## Activity Instructions

5. Before the informational interview:
    - Provide students with the Informational Interview Questionnaire worksheet. Review and adjust as needed.
    - Role-play to practice.
6. During the informational interview:
    - Support the student in performing the informational interview. This process can look different depending on the student's needs.
    - Have the student go through each of the questions and record the answers. Students can record their answers by writing, video recording, or recording on a phone.
7. After the informational interview, reflect on the experience by discussing:
    - What surprised you about this job?
    - What was interesting about this job?
    - What did you dislike about this job?
    - Is this a job that would match your strengths, skills, and interests?
    - Is this something you would like to do for a career?
8. Repeat this process twice more for the other two career clusters.
9. After all informational interviews have been completed, have your student select the career they liked the best.
10. Update Portfolio: My Informational Interview.

    Now that the student has completed the activity, fill in the information gathered from the informational interview that interested the student the most.

## Closure

11. Review how informational interviews help students research careers and narrow down their options. Encourage them to interview others in their families and communities who have careers that interest them.

# Informational Interview Questionnaire

Name of employee: _____

Business: _____

Position title: _____

**Questions for the Informational Interview**

1. What is your title? _____

2. What are your responsibilities at work? _____

3. What does a normal day look like for you? _____

4. How long have you worked here? _____

5. How many hours do you work a week? _____

6. What are your typical hours for a day? _____

7. What is your favorite part of the day? _____

8. What is your least favorite part of the job? _____

9. What steps did you take to get this job? _____

   - Extra school:
   - A certificate:
   - Starting in a different job:

10. What advice do you have for someone who wants to do what you do?

# Work-Based Learning Activity 2: Exploring through a Workplace Tour

This activity provides students with the opportunity to engage in a workplace tour.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will engage in at least one workplace tour.
- Students will identify what they liked and disliked about the business and jobs.

## Activity Materials

- Worksheet: Workplace Tour Reflection (page 41)
- Portfolio: My Workplace Tour (page 86)

## Activity Procedures

### Before Conducting this Activity

1. You will need to set up a workplace tour.
2. Think about local businesses that have jobs that fit several of your student's career interests.

   **TIP:** Use the information from previous career exploration activities to set up a site that fits.
3. Communicate with the business on the student's interests and offer ideas on what aspects of the business to highlight.
4. While in-person workplace tours are ideal, a virtual tour may be an option.
5. Schedule time with the employer at the end of the tour so your student can reflect on what they observed and ask final questions.

### Getting Students Ready

6. Define workplace tours. Explain why tours are important to career exploration and research.
7. Review the workplace tour that has been arranged and what it will involve.
8. Make sure the student understands:
   - The schedule
   - The dress code
   - The expectations
   - What to bring
   - What to look for during the tour

## Activity Instructions

9. Attend the workplace tour.
10. After the workplace tour, use the Workplace Tour Reflection worksheet to discuss the experience.
11. This experience can be repeated as many times as you would like.
12. Update Portfolio: My Workplace Tour.

    Now that the student has completed the activity, fill in the information gathered from the workplace tour.

## Closure

13. Remind students that workplace tours are a hands-on way to learn about a particular career cluster and business. Businesses often have many types of opportunities, and a tour is a great way to figure out all that a business has to offer while getting a glimpse into a variety of careers. Encourage your student to continue to engage in workplace tours on their own.

# Workplace Tour Reflection Worksheet

After completing the workplace tour, answer the following questions to reflect on your experience.

1. Was the business large, medium, or small? _____

    • Did you like the size?

2. Was the business easy to get around? _____

3. Was it loud or quiet? _____

    • Did you like the noise level?

4. What did you like about the workplace tour? _____

5. What didn't you like about the tour? _____

6. What different types of jobs did you see today? _____

7. What jobs looked interesting? _____

8. What jobs didn't you like? _____

9. What knowledge or skills do you need to be successful at this workplace?

10. What other things did you notice or learn about during your tour (such as whether the business has a cafeteria, people are friendly, security)?

11. Is this a place you would want to work? Why or why not?

# Work-Based Learning Activity 3: Learning about a Job through Job Shadowing

This activity provides an opportunity for students to complete a job shadow.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will engage in at least one job shadowing experience.
- Students will reflect on their job shadowing experience and determine if the job that they shadowed interests them.

## Activity Materials

- Note-taking materials
- Portfolio: My Job Shadow (page 86)

## Activity Procedures

### Before conducting this activity

1. You will need to set up the job shadow. Use the information you have learned about your student to pick a good job shadowing experience.
2. Set a time frame. The job shadow can last from 30 minutes up to a couple of hours.
3. Communicate with the person that your student will be shadowing. Share what your student needs to observe.
4. Schedule time with the employer at the end so your student can reflect on what they observed and ask final questions.

### Getting Students Ready

5. Share with your students that **"there are many ways to figure out if a career is right for you. One of those ways is through a job shadow. A job shadow is a way for you to observe and learn what a job is like. This will help you figure out what parts of the job you like and don't like. You might learn skills you can practice now to help you get this job later."**
6. Review the job shadow that you have set up. Make sure the student understands:
    - The schedule
    - The dress code
    - The expectations
    - What to bring
    - What to look for during the shadow

### Activity Instructions

7. Conduct the job shadow. Take notes during the job shadow:
    - Was the student excited and engaged during the job shadow?
    - Did the student seem uncomfortable at any point during the job shadow? What happened to make them feel this way?
    - Did the student interact with patrons or coworkers of the employee? What was that like?
    - What was something positive you noticed?
8. After the job shadow, reflect on the experience, and ask:
    - Does the employee move around a lot or stay at their desk?
    - Are there a lot of people who work in the business or a few?
    - Is it a fast job or is it a slow job?
    - Is it a big space or a small space?
    - Are there customers or is it just the workers?
    - What did you like about the job?
    - What didn't you like about the job?
    - Does the work feel interesting or does it feel boring?
    - Would you like to have this career and do this job in the future?
9. Share what you observed and compare how that aligns with your student's feedback.
10. This experience can be repeated as many times as you would like!
11. Update Portfolio: My Job Shadow.

    Now that the student has completed the activity, fill in the information gathered form the job shadow.

### Closure

12. Review what the student learned from the job shadow and what they decided about the type of work. Encourage students to continue to look for work-based learning opportunities within local businesses. Discuss that their families, friends, teachers, and counselors can help them get connected to businesses for additional experiences.

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## Additional Ideas for Exploring and Researching Careers

Remember, career planning is a continuous process. The activities provided in the lessons are designed to provide students with a jump start, but work doesn't stop here. To continue to develop these skills, check out these additional resources and activities found in the course *Get Ready for Your Career*.

## Lesson 3

# Explore Paths, Create Goals, and Plan

Welcome to Lesson 3: Explore Paths, Create Goals, and Plan. This lesson focuses on the third step of career planning: exploring career pathways and creating a career goal and plan. In this lesson, you will help your student figure out the best career route for them. Most importantly, you will support your student to develop a specific career goal and then create a plan of action to achieve it.

Before we introduce the activities, let's look at what we mean by *explore paths, create goals, and plan.* Have you ever wanted something but didn't know how to get it? At this point, students have an idea of what careers interest them. Now is the time to discover the various pathways towards a career. Many pathways exist to enter a career field. The best pathway might be a vocational training program, college, the military, or going straight into the workforce. It takes exploring the options to know the best fit. After gathering this information about the student, careers, and pathways, it will be time to set a career goal and a plan to achieve it.

## Lesson Overview

To help students complete this step, Lesson 3 will target two skills: exploring paths and creating goals and plans. We recommend that you move through the lesson in order, beginning with Skill A: Explore Paths. You can do all the activities in that skill area or choose ones that best meet the needs of your student. Next, add the information you gathered into the student's portfolio. Then move on to Skill B: Create Goals and Plan activities and add the information gathered into the portfolio.

### Skill A: Explore Paths

Exploring pathways into a career field and discovering the best route for the student based on preferences, skills, and needs.

**Activity 1:** What Are My Options?

**Activity 2:** What Path Do I Want to Take?

**Activity 3:** Finding the Career that Matches My Path

### Skill B: Create Goals and Plan

Putting all the career planning information together to set attainable career goals and develop an action plan to reach the goal.

**Activity 1:** My Career Goal

**Activity 2:** The Road to Reaching My Goals

# Skill A: Explore Paths

Often, different routes exist that can take you to your destination. The same goes for a career. There are different paths you can take, such as college and career training programs, apprenticeships, or military training to learn and gain the needed career skills.

## Why is Exploring Paths Important?

Not every pathway is going to make sense for every student. Each student has their own preferences, skills, and personal situations that will impact which pathway to use. Students won't know which pathways are a good fit without exploring their options. Selecting a pathway that makes sense leads to a more successful journey to obtaining a career.

## Exploring Paths Defined

Exploring paths means discovering the variety of education and training options and understanding the differences between each. It also includes comparing education and training options to personal preferences and needs.

## Exploring Paths Activities

The following activities help students explore pathways and choose the ones that align with preferences and desired careers. Complete all of the activities, or select the ones that best fit the needs of your student. At the end of each activity, add the information gathered from the activity into the student's portfolio.

**Don't forget to check out the videos under Lesson 3 of CTI's *Get Ready for Your Career* course before you get started with the activities!**

### Activity 1: What Are My Options?

**Objective:** This activity will introduce students to career pathways.

**Portfolio:** This is an introductory activity with no portfolio outcome.

### Activity 2: What Path Do I Want to Take?

**Objective:** This activity will have students identify their preferences and make connections between preferences and options.

**Portfolio:** Students will select career pathways that are a good match.

### Activity 3: Finding the Career that Matches My Path

**Objective:** This activity will have students explore specific careers and pathways to narrow down their career options.

**Portfolio:** Students will develop a statement on their selected career.

# Explore Paths Activity 1: What are my Options?

This activity introduces the different types of career pathways.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will discover different types of education and training programs.
- Students will identify different pathways that people in their lives took.

## Activity Materials

- What are Your Choices? (PDF)
  (bit.ly/what-are-your-choices)

## Activity Procedures

### Getting Students Ready

1. Ask, **"How do you think I became a _____?"**
2. Explain, **"I became a _____ by taking the path of _____** (discuss the education and training route you took to get to your current position)**."**
3. Share, **"Career pathways are how we get the training and education needed for a job. Many pathways to a career exist. Can you think of any types of pathways?"**

### Activity Instructions

4. Explain, **"Today we are going to learn about some of the different pathways into a career. Knowing what your options are is the first step in selecting which pathway is right for you!"** Using the What are Your Choices? handout, define each type of pathway listed.
5. After going over each type of pathway, have students match the pathway to the definition.

   **TIP:** Modify this step by cutting out the pathways and descriptions so the student can gesture to the matches. You can also print out pictures that represent each pathway.

6. Next, use the What are Your Choices? handout at home, school, or in the community to locate and interview one person for each of the pathways. Think about this as a scavenger hunt! Once a person is identified as using a listed pathway, write their name and career choice under the pathway.
7. Have students ask:
    - What education and training pathway did you take?
    - What did you like about the pathway that you chose?
    - What was hard about the pathway?
    - Do you know of other pathways that exist for your career?

## Closure

8. Remind your student of the various pathways that exist to achieve careers. Highlight that they know many people who took different pathways. Encourage your student to continue to ask familiar people about the pathways they chose and why.

# Explore Paths Activity 2: What Path Do I Want to Take?

This activity provides the opportunity to explore which pathways best fit with the student's preferences and needs.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will identify their career pathway preferences.
- Students will compare their preferences with available education and training pathways.
- Students will identify their preferred career pathways.

## Activity Materials

- Worksheet: Education and Training Preference Checklist (page 50)
- Worksheet: Education and Training Options (page 51)
- Portfolio: My Career Pathways (page 87)

## Activity Procedures

### Getting Students Ready

1. Ask, **"Does everyone have to take the same path to get to their career?"**
2. Explain, **"It is up to you to decided what route is best for you."**
3. Have your student complete the *Education and Training Preference Checklist*.

### Activity Instructions

4. Say, **"Now that you have a better understanding of your preferences, let's see how they compare to your choices."**
5. Review the *Education and Training Option* document. Add in options that your student needs to know about that are not already listed.
6. After reviewing the education and training requirements, compare those to the student's preference checklist.

7. Have your student select and record the various pathways they are willing to take based on the comparison. It is okay (and preferred) to have multiple options!

8. Update Portfolio: My Career Pathways.

   Now that the student has completed the activity, fill in the information with the pathways that match the student's options and preferences.

## Closure

9. Remind your student how to make decisions regarding education and training preferences and that selecting the right pathway is just as important as selecting the right career. Encourage your student to talk to their family members about how they made their career pathway choices. Ask them to share their preference checklist with their family members.

# Education and Training Preference Checklist

Complete this worksheet by placing a checkmark in the box that best represents your education and training preferences.

## Who I am talking to today:

| | Yes | No | Unsure |
|---|---|---|---|
| Do you want to continue your education and training after high school? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Are you willing to get additional education/training that takes 0 months - 1 years? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Are you willing to get additional education/training that takes 2 years? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Are you willing to get additional education/training that takes 4 years? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Are you willing to get additional education/training that takes more than 4 years? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Are you interested in joining the military? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Do you want to leave high school and go straight into the workforce? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Are you concerned about how to pay for additional education and training? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Do you need to start making money immediately? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Do you like learning in a classroom? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Do you like learning by doing (not from the classroom)? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |
| Are you willing to move for additional education and training? | ☐ | ☐ | ☐ |

## Education and Training Options

Review the chart to gain information on career pathways.

| Pathway | Description | Length | Cost | What You Receive | Examples of Careers |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Apprenticeship | Receive paid on-the-job training with classroom instruction | Varies from 1-6 years | $0 | Nationally-recognized credential | HVAC Servicer, Pharmacy Technician |
| Career and Technical Schools | Receive specific training in high school or at the postsecondary level needed for a career | Average of 3-18 months | Varies depending on the program, but is typically more cost-efficient than college | Certificates and credentials | Air Traffic Controller, Elevator Mechanic |
| College and University | Prepare for a variety of careers or for graduate study | 4 years | Average cost $35,000/year | Bachelor's or Graduate degree | Engineer, Journalist, Teacher, Scientist, Artist |
| Community College | Prepare for a specific career or for transfer to a four-year college | 2 years | Average cost $5,000/year | Associate Degree | Dental Hygiene, Graphic Design, Manufacturing |
| High School Diploma or on-the-job training | Enter a career straight from high school and receive training on the job | 0 years; enter right into a career after graduation | $0 - outside of general job costs like clothing and transportation for work | Job-specific skills training and immediate compensation | Construction Laborers, Surveying and Mapping Technicians |
| Military | Receive specialized training and funding for college in one of six service branches | Depends on the service contract | $0 | Service career through military enlistment or commissioning | Cyber Security Specialist, Technicians, Medical Assistant, Accountant |

# Explore Paths Activity 3: Finding the Career that Matches My Path

This activity matches the career interests with viable pathways that will help your student select a career that aligns with their education and training needs.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will learn about various careers within a targeted cluster and pathway.
- Students will identify critical information for selected careers and pathways.
- Students will select their top career choice from the information gained.

## Activity Materials

- A device, such as tablet or laptop, to conduct online activities
- CAREERwise (bit.ly/careerwise-career-pathways)
- Get into Energy (getintoenergy.org)
- Career Seekers (apprenticeship.gov/career-seekers)
- Worksheet: Career Pathway Information (page 54)
- Portfolio: The Career that Matches My Path (page 87)

## Activity Procedures

### Getting Students Ready

1. Say, **"Once you know the career field you want and what education and training pathway you prefer, you can make a decision on the best career for you."**

   **TIP:** Remind the student of their top career cluster choice from the previous lesson**.**

2. Ask, **"What do you think the pathways are to reaching a career within this cluster?"**

   **TIP:** If needed, provide the options in picture or word form and have students select from the options.

3. Remind the student that many pathways exist to enter into a career field, but not every career has multiple pathways. For example, to be an optometrist you need to obtain a doctoral degree in optometry, pass national boards, and receive a license to practice. However, there are other careers within the same field that do not require as much education. An optometric technician only needs to go through on-the-job training or a two-year associates degree program.

4. Share, **"It is up to you to decide what type of career and pathway you want to take. Maybe you are interested in being a doctor but don't want to spend the time or money that is required to become a doctor. This doesn't mean you cannot work in the medical field."**

## Activity Instructions

5. Explain, **"The final step to exploring pathways is to figure out what pathways exist for the career field of interest and select the best path and career for you."**
6. Using the student's top career cluster of choice, visit CAREERwise and explore pathways under the top career cluster.
   - Select a pathway.
   - Review the interactive image to find various jobs by their education and training requirements.
   - Click on the career options that match their education and training preferences. (Complete Activity 2 to discover education and training preferences).
   - Use the Career Pathway Information worksheet to collect information for each job under the preferred pathway.
7. If you selected the Energy career cluster, visit Get into Energy to explore pathways within the energy cluster.
8. If your student is interested in an apprenticeship, have them visit Career Seekers, as well.
9. Review the information collected and have the student select their top career choice from the options.
10. Update Portfolio: The Career that Matches My Path.

    Now that the student has completed the activity, fill in the information with the student's top career choice.

## Closure

11. Review the importance of making the connection between career interests and pathways. Encourage your student to share the information they learned and the career they chose with their IEP team.

## Career Pathway Information

Use the following chart to organize the information collected on career pathways. Use the example in the first row as a guide.

| Career Cluster | Career Pathway | Education and Training Pathway | Job Title | Wages | Typical Tasks |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Marketing | Market Research | Less than 1 Year | Survey Researchers | $29.82 | Collect information from people.<br>Conduct research on social issues.<br>Collaborate on research activities. |
| | | | | | |
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# Skill B: Create Goals and Plan

Students have explored and identified careers as well as education and training pathways. Now it's time to create a career goal and design a plan to help students move forward with their career planning. With each action taken, students will be more prepared and on the way to reaching their career goals.

## Why is Creating Goals and Plans Important?

Planning for a career involves setting goals and planning the steps needed to reach them. To effectively plan, students need to take all that they have learned about themselves and about careers into consideration to set a career goal. Once they have the goal, then they establish a plan for postsecondary success. Without a goal and plan, all the student has is information. This step is what gets students to take action towards their goals.

## Creating Goals and Plans Defined

Creating a career goal means choosing and stating a career that you hope to achieve. Planning means documenting the skills and experiences you will need to reach that goal. A career goal is the starting point for you to plan the activities that you will need to do. An effective goal will help you to stay focused on thought-out, specific, and measurable action steps. A goal is only as good as the plan created to put it into action.

## Creating Goals and Plans Activities

The following activities help students to develop a career goal and plan. Complete all of the activities or select the ones that best fit the needs of your student. At the end of each activity, add the information gathered from the activity to the student's portfolio.

**Don't forget to check out the videos under Lesson 3 of CTI's *Get Ready for Your Career* course before you get started with the activities!**

### Activity 1: My Career Goal

**Objective:** This activity will help develop a specific career goal.

**Portfolio:** Students will develop a career goal.

### Activity 2: The Road to Reaching My Goals

**Objective:** This activity will help plan what to do to achieve the career goal.

**Portfolio:** Students will create a plan for achieving career goals.

# Create Goals and Plan Activity 1: My Career Goal

This activity allows students to develop their career goals.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will review the information gathered throughout their career planning process.
- Students will identify a career goal based on the information in their portfolio.
- Students will record their career goal.

## Activity Materials

- I'm Determined Goal Plan (PDF) (bit.ly/im-determined-goal-plan)
- Portfolio: My Career Goal (page 87)

## Activity Procedures

### Getting Students Ready

1. Ask, **"Have you ever set a goal before?"**
2. Explain, **"A goal helps us clearly state what we want and how we plan to get there."**
3. Together, provide examples of goals people typically set for themselves.

### Activity Instructions

4. Explain, "Today we are going to review the information we have gathered during the career planning process and select a career goal."
5. Review the student's portfolio of information. Have a discussion about what the student has learned throughout the process.
6. Identify the career goal based on the information.

7. Have the student complete a Goal Plan graphic organizer to define and visualize the career goal. Students can write out or find pictures that represent each section.
    - Begin by writing the goal in the My Goal section.
    - Then write the steps needed to reach the goal in the Next Steps to Reach My Goal section.
    - Reflect on the outcomes the student would like to achieve and write them in the Outcomes section.
    - Finally, think about who can help reach the career goal. Write their names in the People Who Can Support Me to Reach My Goal section.
8. Update Portfolio: My Career Goal.

    Now that the student has completed the activity, fill in the information with the student's career goal.

## Closure

9. Review the completed document together. Discuss what the student's first steps will be. Make a plan to present this document at the student's next IEP meeting.

# Create Goals and Plan Activity 2: The Road to Reaching My Goals

This activity plans for academic courses and experiences needed to achieve career goals.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will brainstorm steps to take to achieve their career goal.
- Students will develop a plan of action.

## Activity Materials

- Large paper
- Poster board
- Art supplies for drawing and/or collaging
- My Planner (PDF) – use the appropriate grade level (bit.ly/edu-planner-my-planner)
- Sample Academic and Career Plan (bit.ly/doe-course-of-study)
- Portfolio: My Career Plan (page 88)

## Activity Procedures

### Getting Students Ready

1. Say, **"Now that you have a career goal, let's look at creating a map to get you there."**
2. On the top of the poster board, write the student's career goal. Have the student draw or create a collage of the career goal.
3. On the large paper, brainstorm ways to achieve the goal along with roadblocks the student might experience. For example:

   **Goal:** To become a social media manager

   **Ways to Achieve:** get a degree in marketing

   **Roadblocks:** paying for college
4. On the poster board, use the art supplies to create a map leading to the goal based on the brainstorming information. Be sure to include roadblocks and ways you might overcome them.

### Activity Instructions

5. After completing the poster, complete the My Planner sheet for the student's grade level. Use the information on the poster to complete the graphic organizer.
6. Use Sample Academic and Career Plan as a reference to help plan an academic course of study and experiences.
7. Review the plan once completed.
8. Update Portfolio: My Career Plan.

   Now that the student has completed the activity, fill in the information with steps needed to reach the student's career goal.

### Closure

9. Review the career planning process and the outcome (a career goal and plan). Review the Academic and Career Plan with members of the student's Individual Education Program (IEP) team to update transition plans with postsecondary goals, coordinated activities, transition services, and annual goals that align with the career goal and plans.

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## Additional Ideas for Exploring Paths, Creating Goals, and Planning

Remember, career planning is a continuous process. The activities provided in the lessons are designed to provide students with a jump start, but work doesn't stop here. To continue to develop these skills, check out these additional resources and activities found in the course *Get Ready for Your Career*.

## Lesson 4

# Prepare for Success

Welcome to the fourth and final lesson of the toolkit: Prepare for Success. This lesson focuses on the fourth step in career planning: preparing, taking action, and identifying your support network. In this lesson, you will guide your students to map the support networks that will help them prepare for career success.

Before we introduce the activities, let's look at what we mean by *prepare for success*. Success doesn't happen accidentally – it takes preparation, planning, and time. Students need a plan that outlines action steps to prepare for a successful career. In addition to exploring careers and setting a goal, securing a career takes preparation and commitment while in school. There are critical steps that every student needs to take like staying in school and reaching out to support networks.

## Lesson Overview

To help students complete this step of career planning, Lesson 4 will target two skills: prepare and take action and identify your support network. We recommend that you move through the lesson in order beginning with Skill A: Prepare and Take Action. You can do all the activities in that skill area or choose ones that best meet the needs of your student. Next, add the information you gathered into the student's portfolio. Then move on to Skill B: Identify Your Support Network activities, and add the information gathered into the portfolio.

**Skill A: Prepare and Take Action**

Organizing and prioritizing tasks that students need to do while in school to get ready for post-school career success.

**Activity 1:** How Can I Prepare?

**Activity 2:** How Do Others Prepare?

**Activity 3:** Improving My Career Plan

**Skill B: Identify Your Support Network**

Identifying people in school, at home, and in the community who will support students to prepare and reach their career goals.

**Activity 1:** My Circle of Support

**Activity 2:** Understanding My Community Support Networks

**Activity 3:** Adding My Support Networks to My Career Plan

# Skill A: Prepare and Take Action

Setting and achieving goals is a skill that requires preparation, planning, and action. Often, many small goals need to be accomplished in order to achieve a larger goal. At this point, students have created a plan with specific steps to reach their goal. Now it is time to look at general steps every student can take to prepare for career success.

## Why is Preparing and Taking Action Important?

Wishing for something and preparing for something have two very different success rates. To achieve your career goal it is important to prepare, plan, and act. Start preparing early. The earlier you take action, the more you can take advantage of the resources and opportunities available in school. Progress is not achieved without action.

## Prepare and Take Action Defined

Preparing and taking action means outlining and taking steps now to reach a career goal. These steps include more than just the educational pathway to reaching a career. This includes action steps like staying in school, trying your best, and meeting with your school counselor. These are general steps that every student can take no matter what grade he or she is in. Once you have a plan you must put your plan into action.

## Prepare and Take Action Activities

The following activities help students develop a plan to prepare for a career right away. Complete all of the activities or select the ones that best fit the needs of your student. At the end of each activity, add the information gathered from the activity into the student's portfolio.

**Don't forget to check out the videos under Lesson 4 of CTI's *Get Ready for Your Career* course before you get started with the activities!**

### Activity 1: How Can I Prepare?

**Objective:** This activity will help students brainstorm ways they can start preparing for their careers right away.

**Portfolio:** Students will develop general steps to take to prepare for a career.

### Activity 2: How Do Others Prepare?

**Objective:** This activity will allow students to hear firsthand how preparation can help someone reach their career goal.

**Portfolio:** Students will develop additional preparation steps in their career plan after speaking with others.

### Activity 3: Improving My Career Plan

**Objective:** This activity will have students select specific tasks that they can do right away to help them prepare for their career.

**Portfolio:** Students will develop a plan that outlines all of the steps students will take.

# Prepare and Take Action Activity 1: How Can I Prepare?

This activity helps students brainstorm and develop a list of different tasks that will prepare them for a career.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will brainstorm ways they can prepare for a successful career.
- Students will choose steps to take in moving forward with obtaining a career.

## Activity Materials

- CTI's 10 Fascinating Facts for Preparing for Success (PDF) (bit.ly/cti-preparing-for-success)
- Art Supplies
- Portfolio: My Career Plan (page 89)

## Activity Procedures

### Getting Students Ready

1. Explain, **"It takes more than just knowing what career you want and the pathway to get there. There are steps every student needs to take while in school to prepare for any career."**
2. Discuss what steps the student has taken so far in the career planning process.
3. Ask, **"What other steps do you think you need to take to reach a career?"**

### Activity Instructions

4. Share and review CTI's 10 Fascinating Facts for Preparing for Success. Talk about the different tasks listed and why they are important when planning for a career.
5. Help the student identify what steps they have already completed.

6. Brainstorm steps that aren't listed that your student could add to their action plan. Get creative and have your student represent steps through drawing.
7. Discuss and select steps they would like to add to their action plan.
8. Update Portfolio: My Career Plan.

   Now that you have completed the activity, add additional action steps to the student's career plan.

## Closure

9. Remind your student, **"It is important to take action now to achieve your career goals. It takes preparation. Everything you do now, like staying in school and learning to ask for help, gets you one step closer to a career."** Encourage your student to share these action steps with their family and support networks.

# Prepare and Take Action Activity 2: How Do Others Prepare?

This activity provides the opportunity to build knowledge on how to prepare for a career by interviewing others.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will interview at least one person on how to prepare for a career.
- Students will reflect on the results of the interview.
- Students will build additional preparation tasks into their action plan.

## Activity Materials

- Worksheet: Interview Form: How to Prepare for a Career (page 66)
- Worksheet: Interview Reflection Form (page 67)
- Portfolio: My Career Plan (page 89)

## Activity Procedures

This activity will be completed in several steps and meetings.

### Getting Students Ready

1. Share, **"We all had our own journey to reaching our careers. We took many steps that helped us prepare for a successful career. People in your life can share the steps they took to reach a career to help you prepare for your future."**
2. Explain that the student will get to interview one person to learn about how they prepared for a career.
3. Together, brainstorm ideas for people they would like to interview. This could be a family member, community member, business professional, or educator.
4. Support your student in requesting the interview.

## Activity Instructions (on the day of the interview):

5. Review the interview questions on the interview form:
   - Role play if the student needs practice
   - Add additional questions as appropriate
6. Support the student through the in-person or virtual interview, as needed.

   **TIP:** It is always good to follow up after the interview with a thank you note or email.
7. After the interview, use the Interview Reflection form to discuss what the student learned.
8. Add any new steps to the student's action plan in their portfolio.
9. Update Portfolio: My Career Plan.

   Now that you have completed the activity, add additional action steps to the student's career plan.

## Closure

10. Review what the student learned from the interview and how that can help them make progress towards a career. Encourage the student to continue to interview people in their life who can give them advice on how to prepare for a career.

# Interview Form: How to Prepare for a Career

Reaching a career takes more than just gaining the education and training needed. Many skills and steps need to be taken to reach and be successful in any career.

Ask the person you are interviewing the following questions to learn more about what it takes to reach a career.

Who am I talking to today? _____

1. What is your current job and role?

2. What employment and education experiences helped you get this job?

3. What were some of the things that you did in high school that helped you become successful in your career?

4. What are some things you didn't do in high school that you wish you had that would have helped prepare you for a career?

5. What general skills are needed for success in any career?

6. Who helped you prepare for the workforce when you were in high school?

7. What advice would you give a high school student preparing for the workforce?

# Interview Reflection Form

After the interview, use this form to help you reflect on what you learned.

1. What did you learn from the interview?

2. What is something you found surprising?

3. What steps did the person you interviewed take that you are already doing?

4. What steps did the person you interviewed take that you are not yet doing?

5. What steps did the person you interviewed take in school that you want to add to your plan?

# Prepare and Take Action Activity 3: Improving My Career Plan

This activity helps students strengthen their career plans by identifying critical steps to take to prepare for their career.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will identify action steps to include in their career plan.
- Students will complete an action plan to prepare for their career.

## Activity Materials

- Worksheet: Getting Prepared and Taking Action Checklist (pages 69-72)
- Portfolio: My Career Plan (page 89)

## Activity Procedures

### Getting Students Ready

1. Explain, **"There are many ways to take action to prepare and plan for a career. Many of those can happen at school or at home."**
2. Discuss the ways your student has been preparing for their career.

### Activity Instructions

3. Provide the Getting Prepared and Taking Action Checklist to your student. Review the list and explain that it is time to identify some actions that the student can take in preparing for their career.
4. Go through the list and have the students check or tell you the ways within each category that they want to take action.
5. Update Portfolio: My Career Plan.

   Now that you have completed the activity, add each action items to the student's career plan.

### Closure

6. Say, **"Now you are ready to take action towards achieving your career goals. You may need some help along the way. That is okay! We will do this together."** Help them develop a plan to share their career plans with family and IEP team members.

# Getting Prepared and Taking Action Checklist

Review the list and choose actions under each of the following skills that you would like to include in your career plan. Each task can help you become better prepared for a successful career.

## A. Increase Self-Determination Skills

*Self-determined people understand their strengths, preferences, interests, and needs (SPIN). They understand their disability and can communicate it to others. When they need help, they know who to ask and understand their rights.*

- ☐ Attend IEP/504 meetings
- ☐ Complete a work preference survey to identify preferences
- ☐ Take part in an extracurricular activity
- ☐ Practice requesting assistance when needed
- ☐ Review information on disability rights
- ☐ Increase knowledge on your disability and how it impacts you
- ☐ Learn about your accommodations
- ☐ Discuss assistive technology supports with your case manager
- ☐ Lead IEP/504 meeting
- ☐ Advocate for your accommodations
- ☐ Make decisions regarding your future
- ☐ Learn about disability disclosure
- ☐ Explore the Job Accommodation Network (askjan.org)
- ☐ Other:

## B. Explore careers and participate in work-based learning experiences

*Career exploration and work-based learning experiences provide opportunities to apply classroom knowledge to real-world work environments.*

- ☐ Continue to explore and research career interests
- ☐ Continue to research career pathways and occupations
- ☐ Explore career and technical education (CTE) classes and programs
- ☐ Ask your CTE teacher, case manager, or school counselor to help you identify and plan for work-based learning opportunities related to your career goal
- ☐ Attend a career fair
- ☐ Take a workplace tour
- ☐ Engage in a service-learning activity
- ☐ Shadow a professional at work
- ☐ Schedule an informational interview
- ☐ Connect with a professional mentor
- ☐ Research an apprenticeship program
- ☐ Apply for an internship
- ☐ Volunteer in your community
- ☐ Apply for summer or part-time work
- ☐ Research and link to appropriate adult agencies [DARS, CSB (Mental Health, ID/DD services, and Substance Abuse)]
- ☐ Other:

## C. Prepare for Education and Training

*Engage in a variety of activities that develop knowledge and skills necessary for a successful transition to postsecondary education and training.*

- ☐ Review your IEP with your case manager
- ☐ Create a postsecondary education and training goal
- ☐ Increase organization skills
- ☐ Assess study skills
- ☐ Develop a schedule for studying
- ☐ Identify education and training requirements for a career goal
- ☐ Discuss diploma options with a school counselor or case manager
- ☐ Review Academic and Career Plan with your school counselor and/or case manager
- ☐ Review Career and Technical Education (CTE) course and program options
- ☐ Earn a CTE Credential
- ☐ Learn more about inclusive higher education programs for students with IDD
- ☐ Know your rights and responsibilities in postsecondary education
- ☐ Prepare for PSAT, ACT, SAT, ASVAB
- ☐ Discuss accommodation needs for PSAT, ACT, SAT, ASVAB
- ☐ Research colleges that align with career interests
- ☐ Visit and tour colleges and/or training programs
- ☐ Identify scholarships and funding resources for education or training
- ☐ Complete a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) (studentaid.gov/h/apply-for-aid)
- ☐ Register with DSS to coordinate services and request college accommodations
- ☐ Complete college and/or training program applications
- ☐ Other:

## D. Prepare for Career Success

*Virginia's 21st Century Workplace Readiness Skills (PDF) (bit.ly/wrs-poster-2019) are personal qualities, people skills, and professional traits that are necessary to maintain employment. Continue to increase and practice workplace readiness skills in school, at home, and in the community.*

- [ ] Take occupation-specific course(s) and industry certification
- [ ] Participate in paid/unpaid internships in a career field or environment
- [ ] Identify your support network at school
- [ ] Recognize your support network at home
- [ ] Locate supports within your community
- [ ] Arrive at school and appointments on time
- [ ] Take responsibility for actions and decisions
- [ ] Know your rights and responsibilities in employment
- [ ] Apply for a state-issued ID
- [ ] Obtain a copy of your social security card
- [ ] Create a resume
- [ ] Explore transportation options for work
- [ ] Practice interviewing for a job
- [ ] Search for job openings
- [ ] Open a bank account
- [ ] Create an email account
- [ ] Compose a post-interview email response
- [ ] Manage financial responsibilities
- [ ] Other:

# Skill B: Identify Your Support Network

We all need help to reach our goals. Your student, like anyone else, will need support from various sources. It is important to identify current support networks and ways to broaden those networks to achieve career success.

## Why is it Important to Identify Your Support Network?

Everyone has benefited from having a support network at some point in their career. It is important to recognize, establish, and understand your support network. A career path will start in school and continue after school. So it is vital to identify supports available now and after graduation within the home, school, and community. These support networks will help students execute their career plan.

## Identify Your Support Network Defined

Identifying your support network means looking around at the people and organizations in your life and figuring out who can help you. It also means learning about supports that are available that you are not currently using. Networks can include family, community agencies, support groups, religious communities, and case managers.

## Identify Your Support Network Activities

The following activities help identify and build support networks. Complete all of the activities or select the ones that best fit the needs of your student. At the end of each activity, add the information gathered from the activity into the student's portfolio.

**Don't forget to check out the videos under Lesson 4 of CTI's *Get Ready for Your Career* course before you get started with the activities!**

### Activity 1: My Circle of Support

**Objective:** This activity will identify who is in the student's circle of support.

**Portfolio:** Students will complete a Circle of Support map.

### Activity 2: Understanding My Community Support Networks

**Objective:** This activity will build the student's knowledge of community partners.

**Portfolio:** Students will add information on community resources to their support network.

### Activity 3: Adding My Support Networks to My Career Plan

**Objective:** This activity will have students add their support network to their career plan.

**Portfolio:** Students will complete their career plan that includes their support network.

# Identify Your Support Network Activity 1: My Circle of Support

This activity helps student understand and develop their circle of support map for career planning.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will identify supports in their home, school, and community.
- Students will list how the identified support helps them.
- Students will identify areas where they are missing essential supports and how to access these supports.

## Activity Materials

- Large chart/post-it paper
- Portfolio: My Circle of Support (page 90)

## Activity Procedures

### Getting Students Ready

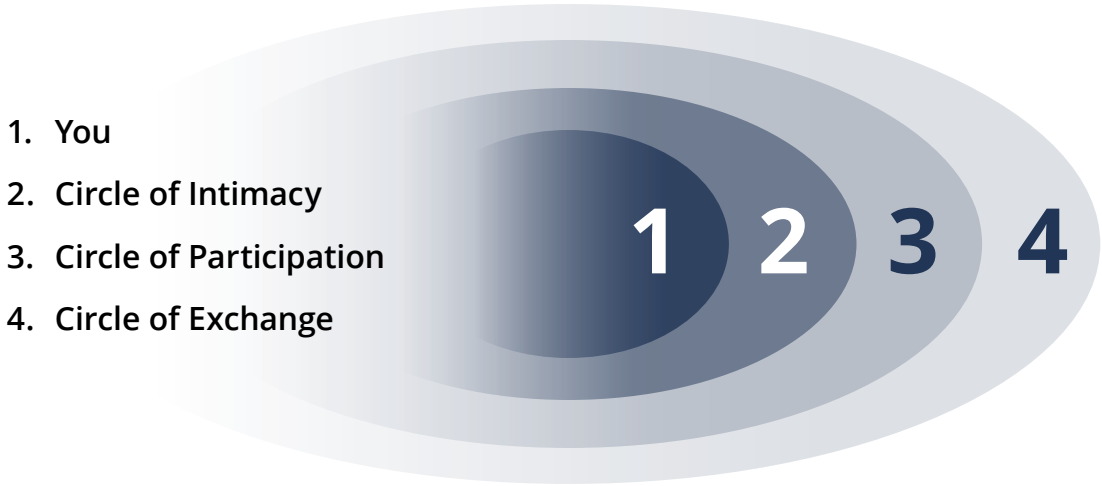
1. Say, **"We all need help and support sometimes. This is true when preparing and planning for our careers. We need to identify who in our lives can help us achieve our goals."**
2. Together, on a large piece of chart or post-it paper, make a list of people who help the student already. These are people in school, at home, and in the community.
3. Identify how each of these people helps the student. Do they provide emotional support? Do they help make educational decisions? Do they transport the student?

### Activity Instructions

4. Work with your student to take the list created during the introductory activity to create a circle of support map.

5. Create a circle of support on large chart paper (see example below). In the middle, put the student's name and draw three circles around the student at the center. These circles represent the student's circle of intimacy, circle of participation, and circle of exchange.
   - The circle of intimacy will be people you rely on daily and who know you and your strengths best. Family, caregivers, and your best friends will likely fall into this category.
   - The circle of participation will be people who you regularly call on for assistance. These include friends at school, teachers, coaches, religious community members, coworkers, and neighbors.
   - The circle of exchange will be people who support you through a paid service or agency. This includes doctors, therapists, support providers, and case managers.
6. Take your list of supports and assign them to a circle.

   Once the circle is filled, identify any of the inner circles that have few or no people listed.




7. If there are blanks or types of circles that need to grow, make a plan on how to build that circle. Create a plan that includes:
   - What type of support is missing
   - Examples of people or agencies that could fill the support needed
   - Action steps to reach out and connect with that support
8. Update Portfolio: My Circle of Support.

   Now that the student has completed the activity, fill in the circle of support.

## Closure

9. Encourage your student to share their circle of support with their IEP team. The IEP team can help students figure out ways to build their circle of support.

# Identify Your Support Network Activity 2: Understanding My Community Support Networks

This activity introduces students to supports in the community that can help students plan and prepare for a career.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will identify community partners that can help with their career goals.
- Students will invite community partners to their next IEP meeting.

## Activity Materials

- Worksheet: My Community Partners (page 78)
- Worksheet: Community Partner Interview (page 79)
- Portfolio: My Community Supports (page 90)

## Activity Procedures

This activity will take place over several days or meetings.

### Getting Students Ready

1. Ask, **"Who are the people in your life that can help you plan and prepare for your career?"**
2. Discuss those support networks.
3. Say, **"Did you know that there are agencies and organizations in the community that can help you as well?"**

4. Use the *My Community Partner* worksheet to talk about the different types of community supports.
    - Pick a type of support the student might need (employment, transportation, financial, etc.).
    - Review their current circle of support to see if they have these resources in their support network (see Activity 1).
    - If they have the resources, record them in the Community Partner box.
    - If they do not have the resources, help the student brainstorm the community resources that are available.
    - Write down contact information for the resource(s).
    - Highlight the resources that the student is not yet familiar with or connected to.
    - Help the student choose the highlighted resources that they want to learn more about.
    - Invite the community resources to their next IEP meeting.

## Activity Instructions (at the IEP meeting):

5. Have the student interview the community resource(s) at their IEP meeting to learn more about the services each provides using the Community Partner Interview form.
6. After the interview, have the student and family decide if that resource is one that the student wants to move forward with.
7. If so, add the community resource to their circle of support and make plans to connect with the resource.
8. Update Portfolio: My Community Supports.

    Now that the activity is completed, fill in the chart with information on the community resource the student plans to use to help them in their career planning process.

## Closure

9. Remind the student that they are not alone in their journey to achieving their career. Talk about the community partners that the student now has connections with. Encourage the student to follow up with the community partner and take action in obtaining their services.

# My Community Partners

Use this form to brainstorm community partners in your area and in Virginia that can support you in your career journey.

**Steps:**

1. Fill in the first column with the type of support you need. This might be transportation, employment services, financial education and assistance, or work-based learning opportunities.
2. Research community partners that assist in the area.
3. Write down the community partner(s) you found in the second column.
4. Write the partner(s) contact information in the last column.

| Type of Support | Community Partner | Contact Information |
|---|---|---|
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## Community Partner Interview

Use these interview questions to ask community partners about their supports and services.

1. What is the name of your agency or organization?

2. What is your position within this agency or organization?

3. What type of services and or assistance do you provide?

4. What are the requirements to get supports and services?

5. Are your services free or is there a cost?

6. What are the benefits of receiving your services?

7. How do I apply or sign up to receive your services?

8. Is there anything else I should know about your agency or organization?

# Identify Your Support Network Activity 3: Adding My Support Networks to My Career Plan

This activity helps your students identify the supports they have for each step of their career plans. After all, no one can achieve their goals alone.

## Activity Objectives

- Students will add their support networks to their career plan.
- Students will identify gaps in their support network for their career plan.
- Students will develop a plan to build needed supports.

## Activity Materials

- Portfolio: My Career Plan (page 89)
- Portfolio: My Circle of Support (page 90)
- Portfolio: My Completed Career Plan (page 91)

## Activity Procedures

### Getting Students Ready

1. Explain, **"You have many people in your life who are here to support you through your journey. Your family, school counselors, case managers, friends, and community. Now is the time to figure out who in your support network will help you with specific parts of your career planning."**
2. Review the student's circle of support and career plan from their portfolio.

### Activity Instructions

3. Say, **"Now that you have spent some time identifying your support network, it's time to add them to your career plan."**
4. Review each step listed in the career plan.
5. Select one or more people from the student's circle of support that will help the student accomplish the action step.
6. If no one in the circle of support is a good fit to help with the action step, discuss who would be a good person or agency to help them.

7. Make a plan to reach out to new networks they need and are missing from the career plan.
8. Update Portfolio: My Completed Career Plan.

   Now that the student has completed the activity, add who will support the student for each step in their action plan.

### Closure

9. Review why support networks are important and how they help us achieve our career goals. Encourage students to reach out to the identified supports to discuss how they can help the student prepare and take action towards reaching their career goal.

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## Additional Ideas for Preparing for Success

Remember, career planning is a continuous process. The activities provided in the lessons are designed to provide students with a jump start, but work doesn't stop here. To continue to develop these skills, check out these additional resources and activities found in the course *Get Ready for Your Career*.

# Career Planning Toolkit

# Portfolio

Use this section to capture the information gathered from each of the activities. At the end of the toolkit, you will be able to use this portfolio and take action in achieving their career goals. This will serve as a folder of information as well as an action plan.

## Lesson 1

### Skill A: Self-Determination Skills

**DIRECTIONS:** Now that you have completed Skill A Activity 1, fill in the information with your top three self-determination strengths and three self-determination skills that you need to work on.

| Question | My Response |
|---|---|
| What are my three self-determination strengths? | |
| What three self-determination skills do I need to improve? | |

## Skill A: Career-Related Goals

**DIRECTIONS:** Now that you have completed Skill A Activity 2, fill in the information with the career-related goals you will work on to plan for your future.

| My goal is: | Importance of goal | How will I know when I meet my goal | Due date for goal | Goal steps |
|---|---|---|---|---|
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## Skill A: My Top Three Things

**DIRECTIONS:** Now that you have completed Skill A Activity 3, fill in the information with the three things that are important to you. Knowing what is important to you will help you select a career!

| My Important Thing | Why Is It Important? | How does this relate to a career? |
|---|---|---|
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## Skill B: My SPIN

**DIRECTIONS:** Now that you have completed Skill B Activity 1 and 2, fill in the information you gathered above to complete your SPIN.

| My SPIN | What Others Think | What I Think |
|---|---|---|
| Strengths | | |
| Preferences | | |
| Interests | | |
| Needs | | |

## Skill B: One-Pager

**DIRECTIONS:** Now that you have completed Skill B Activity 3, upload or copy and paste your one-pager here.

# Lesson 2

## Skill A: My Top Three Career Clusters

**DIRECTIONS:** Now that you have completed Skill A Activity 2, fill in the information with your top three career clusters.

| Career Cluster | My strengths that will help me succeed in this cluster | Jobs I want to find out more about in this cluster | What I like about the jobs in this cluster |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |
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## Skill A: My Top Career Cluster

**DIRECTIONS:** Now that you have completed Skill A Activity 3, fill in the information with your top career cluster and the information you gathered on that cluster.

| Career Cluster | Example of Jobs | Projected Labor Market Growth | Skills and Education Needed | Typical Salary Range |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

## Skill B: My Informational Interview

**DIRECTIONS:** Now that you have completed Skill B Activity 1, fill in the information you gathered from the informational interview that interested you the most.

| Top career from interview | Responsibilities of the job | What I liked about the job | What steps would I take to get this job |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | | |

## Skill B: My Workplace Tour

**DIRECTIONS:** Now that you have completed Skill B Activity 2, fill in the information you gathered from the workplace tour.

| Business I toured | Types of jobs I saw | What I liked about the tour | What I didn't like about the tour | Is this a place I would like to work? Why or why not? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

## Skill B: My Job Shadow

**DIRECTIONS:** Now that you have completed Skill B Activity 3, fill in the information you gathered from the job shadow.

| Business and job I shadowed | The tasks I observed | What I liked about the job | What I didn't like about the job | Is this job I would like to have? Why or why not? |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | | | |

# Lesson 3

## Skill A: My Career Pathways

**DIRECTIONS:** Now that you have completed Skill A Activity 2, fill in the information with the pathways that match your options and preferences.

I am interested in taking the following pathways to reach my career:

1.

2.

3.

## Skill A: The Career that Matches My Path

**DIRECTIONS:** Now that you have completed Skill A Activity 3, fill in the information with your top career choice.

My career choice is: _____.

## Skill B: My Career Goal

**DIRECTIONS:** Now that you have completed Skill B Activity 1, fill in the information with your career goal.

**My Career Goal:**
After education and training, I will be employed as a: _____.

## Skill B: My Career Plan

**DIRECTIONS:** Now that you have completed Skill B Activity 2, fill in the information with steps needed to reach your career goal.

| Items in Plan | Action Plan | Timeline |
|---|---|---|
| My career goal: | | |
| Education and training plan (high school course, college or other training programs): | | |
| Extracurricular activities that will help me reach my goal: | | |
| Work-based learning opportunities needed: | | |
| Other steps that will help me reach my goal: | | |

# Lesson 4

## Skill A: My Career Plan

**DIRECTIONS:** Now that you have completed Skill A Activity 1, 2, and 3, add additional actions steps to your career plan. Copy and paste what you have already completed from the chart above.

| Items in Plan | Action Plan | Timeline |
|---|---|---|
| My career goal: | | |
| Education and training plan: | | |
| Extracurricular activities that will help me reach my goal: | | |
| Work-based learning opportunities needed: | | |
| Other steps that will help me reach my goal: | | |
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## Skill B: My Circle of Support

**DIRECTIONS:** Now that you have completed Skill B Activity 1, fill in the circle of support.




Someone who supports you:

Someone who supports you:

Someone who supports you:

## Skill B: My Community Supports

**DIRECTIONS:** Now that you have completed Skill B Activity 2, fill in the chart with information on the community resource you plan to use to help you in your career planning process. Don't forget you can also add the community resources to your above circle of support!

| Type of Support | Community Resource | Contact Information |
|---|---|---|
| e.g. employment | e.g. Department for Aging and Rehabilitation Services | e.g. Local Office: (xxx) xxx-xxxx |
| | | |
| | | |
| | | |

## Skill B: My Completed Career Plan

**DIRECTIONS:** Now that you have completed Skill B Activity 3, add who will support you for each step in your action plan. Copy and paste what you have already completed from the chart above.

| Items in Plan | Action Plan | Timeline | Your Support Network |
|---|---|---|---|
| My career goal: | | | |
| Education and training plan: | | | |
| Extracurricular activities that will help me reach my goal: | | | |
| Work-based learning opportunities needed: | | | |
| Other steps that will help me reach my goal: | | | |
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