



To Work

Lesson Plan

Objectives:

1. Participants will identify skills, strengths, and work goals.
2. Participants will know where to go for job services and what specific services are offered.
3. Participants will talk together about concerns regarding employment.
4. Participants will commit to being supportive of their partners in regards to finding employment.
5. Participants will learn how work affects families and how families affect work.
6. Participants will use community services for finding and maintaining employment.
7. Participants will develop personal work goals.

Materials:

- Participant binder pockets with handouts:
 - What Steps do I Take to Get the Job I Want? handout
 - Job-Related Skills handout
 - Personal Skills handout
 - Sample Job Advertisements handout
 - Tips for Your Job Search handout
 - Sample Interview Questions handout
 - Setting Goals for Working worksheet
 - Sample Application for Employment
 - *Planning your Job Search* booklet
 - *Making the Most of an Interview* booklet
 - Resource list for your area (see Preparation note #1)
- SPEAK/HEAR skills card
- Flip chart, dry erase board, etc.
- Pens
- Attendance sheet
- Name tags
- Materials for participant tables:
 - Play dough
 - Pipe cleaners
 - Paper and markers, etc.
- Participant incentives

Session Overview:

Welcome and introductions	(10-15 minutes)
Discussion: To work or not to work?	(5-7 minutes)
Discussion: How family affects work and how work affects family	(5 minutes)
Discussion: How do I know if getting a job will help my family?	(5-7 minutes)
Activity: Setting goals	(10 minutes)
Discussion: Steps to getting the job you want	(40 minutes)
Career Center resources	(10 minutes)
Activity: Create an action plan	(5 minutes)
Talking about it: Goals for work	(10 minutes)
Introduce take home activity	(1 minute)
Wrap-Up	(10 minutes)

<i>Session total</i>	<i>(2 hours)</i>
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Preparation:

1. Create a list of resources for your area. Include this list in participant packets. Resources should include information about locations of GED testing centers and information about available schools and training programs. You can also refer participants to the local career center for more information about applying for schools and training programs. You may also wish to include information about incarceration re-entry programs, if applicable to your participants.

2. One goal of this session is to connect participants with the resources to help them gain and keep employment. For this reason, we suggest that an employee from the career center come and spend about 10 minutes presenting what the career center has to offer. If no one is available, then the facilitator will need to learn what resources the local career center offers and give a brief presentation to participants, along with the booklets from MO Career Centers (See list of materials for this session and the note below).

3. This lesson includes the use of materials from the Missouri Department of Economic Development, Division of Workforce Development (*Planning Your Job Search* and *Making the Most of an Interview*). To order these materials, contact the Missouri Department of Economic Development at 573-751-4962. You may also wish to use similar materials that are available in your area.

4. If the facilities allow, find out about holding the “To Work” session at a local career center.

5. There is an activity included in this lesson where participants look at job advertisements. A sample list of job advertisements is included in this curriculum. However, you may want to bring in actual job advertisements from a local newspaper or other source in your area.

Procedure:**1. Welcome participants to the session and reconnect (10-15 minutes).**

- Introduce yourself to the group and the title of today's lesson, "To Work."
- Welcome participants to the session and, especially if you have new participants, go around the room and have everyone briefly introduce themselves.
- Write the question below on flip chart paper or dry erase board. Go around the room and have each participant answer.

Ask: *"When you were a child, what did you want to be when you grew up?"*

- Ask about take home activities from the previous session (if applicable).
- Introduce the lesson.

Say: *"Today we are going to talk about advantages and disadvantages of working, how work affects your family and how your family affects your work, as well as some steps you can take to get a job you want. We are also going to create goals and an action plan for what you can do next to find a job if you choose to work."*

Your work could be paid employment or it could be unpaid work, such as work around the house (i.e. cooking meals, doing laundry, mowing the lawn, or fixing the car). Today we are going to focus on paid work. Paid work affects our lives in many ways. If you are not satisfied with your job or if your job is not meeting your needs financially or work goals you have, that can affect other areas of your life.

If you are in a relationship and you and your partner agree that you will be home with your children while he/she works outside the home, then today you can focus on how you can best support your partner's work."

2. Discussion: To work or not to work? (5-7 minutes).

- Write participant responses to the following questions on flip chart paper or dry erase board.

Ask: *“What are some disadvantages of working?”*

Sample responses:

- Being away from your family.
- Paying for child care.
- Losing other benefits if you get a job.
- Hours may be different from your partner’s and you might not see him or her very much.
- Having to pay for gas.

Ask: *“What are some advantages of working?”*

Sample responses:

- More money coming in.
- Might find something you enjoy doing.
- Meet new people and make friends.
- Support yourself and your family.

3. Discussion: How work affects family and how family affects work (5 minutes).

Ask: *“How do you think your children are affected by your work?”*

Sample responses:

- If you are stressed about work, it can affect how you parent. You may not be as patient or as sensitive to your child’s needs if you go home and keep thinking about problems at work.
- If you have a good experience at work, you might be in a better mood and might show more affection and have more patience.
- If you can make more money, you may be better able to buy the things your family needs.

Ask: *“How might your work affect your couple relationship?”*

Sample responses:

- If you had a stressful day, you might take out your frustrations on your partner.
 - If you have a good day, you might be more positive with your partner.
 - A good experience at work might put you in a better mood when you are with your family.
- Have participants think about how family can affect work.

Ask: “How might your family affect your job?”

Sample responses:

- If my child is sick, I may need to miss work to pick him or her up from school.
- If I had an argument with my partner the night before, that can influence my mood at work.

4. Discussion: How do I know if getting a job will help my family? (5-7minutes).

Ask: “How do you know if getting a job will benefit your family?” “How do you know if you will be better off or not?” “What are some things you might need to think about?”

Say: “Everyone’s situation is different. What works for one family may not work for another. When thinking about whether or not a job will benefit your family, here are a few questions to consider:

1. Do you have child care for your child while you are at work?
2. Do you make enough to pay for things you need?
3. Do you have transportation to get to work?
4. Would you be working different hours from your partner and not see your partner?
5. Will you see your child as much as you want?
6. How does your partner feel about you getting a job?”

Say: “It’s important to think about each of these matters. If you have a partner, you need to talk about it and make a decision together about what is best for you and your family. If you decide that getting a job is not what is best for your family at this time, maybe you will want to start taking some classes or getting some training so that when you do decide to get a job, you will be better able to support your family.”

Ask: “Are there other things that you think are important to consider when you are thinking about whether or not a job will benefit your family right now?”

Transition: “As you can see, there can be both advantages and disadvantages to working and many questions to consider. It’s important to think about your own situation and your family.

Now let's think about the goals that you have for working. If you have decided not to work right now, then think about your partner or about a job you might want in the future. Setting goals gives you something to work towards."

5. Activity: Setting goals (10 minutes).

- Have participants write goals they have for work on the "Setting Goals" worksheet in their packets.

🗨 Say: *"These may be goals for finding a job, for getting more education, for increasing the skills that you have, or maybe for getting some kind of training. Don't worry about the action plan just yet. We will do that a little later."*

6. Discussion: What steps do I take to get the job I want? (40 minutes).

🗨 Say: *"Now that you have thought a little about your goals for working, we are going to talk next about steps you can take to get the job that you want."*

- Briefly go through the steps listed below, letting participants know that there is a handout in their packets that lists these steps. Also note that you will be discussing each step in more detail.
 - a. *Self inventory: Think about your interests, skills, goals, and what you have experience doing.*
 - b. *Explore jobs: Find out what kinds of jobs you can get with your skills and experiences. Once you identify a job you want, learn all you can about it.*
 - c. *Get necessary training and education.*
 - d. *Search for job openings.*
 - e. *Apply and interview for jobs.*

<p>a) Self inventory (See "What steps do I take to get the job I want?").</p>
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- Introduce the job-related and personal skills discussion.

🗨 Say: *"The first step in getting the job you want is to think about your skills, interests, and any experiences that might help prepare you for a job."*

When thinking about what you have to offer, it is important to consider different types of skills that you have."

- (Write each of these names on flip chart paper for participants to see)
 - **Job-related skills (or work-related skills)**
 - **Personal skills**

Job-related skills

Ask: *“What are some job-related skills that individuals may have?”*

- Write responses on flip chart or dry erase board.

Sample responses:

- Typing skills
- Mechanical skills
- Working with your hands

Personal skills

Ask: *“What are some personal skills that individuals may have?”*

Sample responses:

- Responsibility
- Self-esteem
- Being optimistic
- Being able to manage your time well
- Being a good team member
- Taking leadership roles
- Being customer-oriented (focus on customers’ wants and needs)
- Treating your boss as the authority

Say: *“Job-related skills and personal skills are both important to consider when thinking about the kind of job you want. Sometimes it’s too easy to think about the skills we don’t have, so we might overlook the skills we do have. Although sometimes jobs do have certain job-skill requirements (such as training or education), personal skills can show an employer that you would be a good employee, maybe because you are a fast learner, you work well on a team, or you are very dependable.”*

- Refer participants to the “Job-Related Skills” and “Personal Skills” handouts to demonstrate that there are different types of skills they need to consider when looking for certain jobs.
- Read through the lists of skills, clarifying any that participants have questions about.

Say: *“Take a few minutes to think about the skills that you have. In your folders, you will see two handouts listing job-related and personal skills. Check off the skills that you have and add any others that are not listed.”*

- Give participants about 2-3 minutes to work on this, then:

Ask: *“Were you able to identify any skills (personal or job-related) that you didn’t think about before?”*

b) Explore jobs.

Say: *“After you have identified your skills and interests, think about what kind of job you might want.”*

- Have participants look at the “Sample Job Advertisements” handout in their packets. Suggest that they look in local newspapers to get ideas of jobs that are out there and what skills, education, and training they would need to get those jobs.

Say: *“When you are looking for a job, it is helpful to ask yourself, ‘What am I interested in? What am I good at?’ Think about your skills and interests.”*

- Also suggest that participants visit the local career center (give location and contact information) to learn what jobs match their skills and interests.
- Note that they may need to look for and consider jobs that they can get while working toward a job they really want.

You may say something like, ***“A job that you find now isn’t necessarily the perfect job for you and it may not have everything that you would hope for. However, that job may help you support yourself and your family until you can find something else or work your way up to something better.”***

c) Get training and education.

Say: *“Once you have decided what work you would like to do, the next step is to get the training or education that you need for the job.”*

- Give participants information about getting a GED. Refer participants to the local career center for assistance with preparing for the GED. Also, share locations of testing centers for the GED in your area.
- Give participants information on schools and training programs in your area, if available. You can also refer them to the career center for more information about applying for these schools and training programs.

Say: *“Here are some things to think about when you consider the education and training you might need for a job:”*

(Elaborate on each question, as necessary)

- *What schools or training programs are in your area and what programs do they offer?*
 - *For example, you might consider vocational or technical schools or 2- or 4-year colleges.*
 - *The local career center or library can help you find information about schools and programs they offer.*
- *How much will your education or training cost?*
 - *Check with the school’s financial aid office to find out about any grants and scholarships you can apply for to help you pay for school.*
 - *If you choose to take out student loans to help you pay for school, be careful about how much money you borrow because you will have to pay these back after you finish school.*
 - *You can also go to your local area career center to get help applying for scholarships and grants.*
- *How much might you make when you have finished your education or training?*
- *Do you have child care for your child while you take classes?*
- *How will you get to your classes?*

d) Search for job openings.

Ask: *“What are some ways you can find out about jobs that are open in your area?”*

Sample responses:

- Local newspapers
- On the Internet

- The library or career center should provide Internet access for job searches.
- Ask family or friends about openings at their jobs

e) Apply and interview for jobs.

Application practice:

- Have participants get out the sample job application from their packets and fill it out to give them some practice filling out a job application.
- Help them with any questions they have as they fill out the application.
- When everyone is finished, go over the “Tips for Your Job Search” handout.

Ask: *“Are there any other tips that you would like to share about applying for and interviewing for jobs?”*

Interview practice:

- Have participants get into groups of two to practice interviewing skills using the “Sample Interview Questions” handout. Have one participant ask questions while the other answers then have them switch roles.

Note: You may want to have participants pretend they are applying for one of the jobs on the “Sample Job Advertisements” handout.

- Let participants know that these are some standard questions employers may ask, but different questions may be asked.
- Go around during this practice time to give suggestions as needed.

7. Career center resources (10 minutes).

- If possible, have an employee of the local career center come and present resources to the participants.
- Have the career center employee answer these questions in a 10 minute or so presentation:
 - Where is the local career center?
 - What resources does the career center offer?
- If a career center employee is not available, locate information about career centers in your area and present that to participants.

8. Activity: Create an action plan (5 minutes).

- Have participants create an action plan for what they will do next in terms of employment, using the “Setting Goals for Working” handout.

Say: *“With all these resources we have talked about and the skills and goals you identified earlier today, I now want you to create an action plan. Ask yourself, ‘What is my next step?’”*

Ask: *“After today’s lesson, what do you think you might do now?”*

Say: *“There is space on the right-hand side of your ‘Setting Goals’ worksheet to write out your action plan to meet each of your goals. Take a few minutes to think about what you can do next to work toward meeting each of your goals. This may include things that you can do in your job search or in how you can support your partner in his or her job search.”*

9. Talking about it: Goals for work (10 minutes).

- Have participants talk with a partner about their goals and how they plan to meet those goals.
- Distribute SPEAK/HEAR skills cards for participants to use during the dialogue.
- Some participants may be familiar with these skills from attending a previous session. However, the skills may be new to some participants.
- Briefly read through the skills listed on the SPEAK/HEAR skills card, and then allow participants time to talk with their partners.

10. Introduce take home activity (1 minute).

Say: *“Look over the goals you created and take steps to meet those goals. You may want to post your ‘Setting Goals’ worksheet somewhere so you will see it every day to help you work toward your goals.”*

It’s also important to remember to be supportive of your partner’s goals. If you need help figuring out how you can best meet your goals or if you need any other job assistance, you can contact your local career center.”

11. Wrap up the session and give out incentives (10 minutes).

- Ask if anyone has any general questions.
- Tell participants that they can visit <http://ncfamilies.com/jitp/> and for community resources.

- Thank participants for coming and participating in the lesson.
- Make sure everyone knows the day and location of the next session.

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