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SP461A Finding Work - Job Discovery for Youth

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THE UNIVERSITY OF TENNESSEE
AGRICULTURAL EXTENSION SERVICE
SP461-A

Finding Work

Job Discovery for Youth

Before you begin looking for a job, you should know what you have to offer an employer. What can you do? What would you like to learn? What steps do you need to follow to find just the right job? First you need to carefully consider the product in question—**YOU**.

Even if you do not have previous work experience, you can find a job you will like. All you need is a good plan of attack, hard work and patience. Use the information in this leaflet to help you discover your job skills and experience, how to present yourself in a personal data sheet and strengths to emphasize in job interviews.

Self Inventory

By measuring your personal assets, you are taking a self-inventory. This inventory can help you know more about yourself and help you get the right job. The inventory may also help you determine the education or training you need to qualify for the future career you want. Obtain a notebook and label it "Job Discovery Journal." This notebook will be a very important reference in your job campaign. On the first page in the notebook, make a list of your assets (strengths) and weaknesses. Use the accompanying outline. You can use this information to maximize your strengths and minimize weaknesses when you apply for a job.

Self-Inventory Outline

Assets	Weaknesses
Personality and Attitude	
Example: I am friendly.	Example: I like to make my own rules.
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
Education and Abilities	
Example: I am good in math.	Example: I need typing skills.
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
Physical	
Example: I am neat in appearance.	Example: I dislike getting up in the morning.
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.
Social Relationships	
Example: I like being with people.	Example: I laugh too much.
1.	1.
2.	2.
3.	3.
4.	4.

Discovering Your Skills and Abilities

Next, look for activities you have done and enjoyed doing, or that had results you were proud of. As these activities occur to you, list each activity at the top of a separate page in your Job Discovery Journal. Label the pages "Activity #1," "#2" and so forth. Try to list 10 or more activities, and don't be discouraged if this activity inventory takes a while. These experiences could have happened a few days ago or several years ago. The activities could have involved intense work over a short period of time, such as organizing a youth Sunday school car wash, or preparing a winning entry in a 4-H project. Or, these activities could be roles you have played on and off for several years, such as preparing meals for your family on a regular basis or repairing the lawn mower when it breaks down. Think about sports, school clubs, 4-H activities and hobbies you enjoy.

After listing your activities, go through your journal page by page and identify skills and abilities needed to do each activity. Refer to the examples of how two students described their activities. Skills and abilities needed to do the activities were identified by Brad and Jodi.

After carefully listing your activities and determining the skills involved in each activity, you're beginning to see unique patterns of skills emerging. No single activity gives all the current job possibilities or future career clues needed to help with your career choice. However, these possibilities are a starting point

Jodi Teenager

Activity #1	Planned and prepared evening family meals since I was 13 years old. Used various methods of food preparation and assisted with food purchases within a budget limit.
Skills and Abilities Needed	Organizational skills, time management, creativity, nutrition and food preparation knowledge, initiative, follows instructions.
Current Job Possibilities	Dietary assistant in hospital, cafeteria, nursing home; food service worker in fast food establishment or supermarket deli; waitress
Future Careers	Dietician, restaurant manager, food service administrator, food science technician, hotel banquet and convention coordinator
Activity #2	Community high school pep club treasurer for one year; president of pep club for one year.
Skills and Abilities Needed	Financial record keeping, leadership, trustworthy, responsible, organizational skills, people skills
Current Job Possibilities	Part-time clerical work, retail salesperson, grocery store cashier, assistant to community recreation director
Future Careers	Accountant, business management, public relations, teacher, guidance counselor, financial planner

Brad Teenager

Activity #1	Helped with early morning and evening farm chores since I was nine years old. Operated various kinds of farm equipment, assisted with planting and harvesting crops and handled livestock.
Skills and Abilities Needed	Responsible worker, observant, mechanical skills, organizational skills, listens to and follows instructions.
Current Job Possibilities	Farm hand, part-time work with veterinarian or agribusiness firm; golf course greens assistant.
Future Careers	Farmer, veterinarian, Extension county agent, nursery producer, agricultural researcher, vocational agricultural teacher, agribusiness sales.

for your job search. And, you probably have a feeling of confidence now that you realize you do have more experience than previously thought.

If after the inventory process you still do not know what kind of job you want, try the following suggestions:

a. Talk with your school guidance counselor about possible part-time work while you are a student and discuss future career options.

b. Visit the local office of Job Service, a division of the Tennessee Department of Employment Security. Job Service can provide information about available jobs, as well as qualifications needed to fill them. Counselors are also available to help you decide what sort of work is best suited to your abilities and interests.

c. Visit your local public library. Consult the Occupational Outlook Handbook, published by the U.S. Department of Labor. The handbook gives the latest information about several hundred occupations. It tells about the work involved, where the jobs are located, what training and other qualifications are needed to fill them and the chances for advancement. It also discusses earnings and working conditions and assesses future job opportunities for people in the field.

Preparing a Personal Data Sheet

You have spent some time evaluating yourself. Now, you need to organize this information into a personal data sheet which you can share with prospective employers. A resume or personal data sheet is a concise inventory of your job assets. It tells what you have to offer an employer for a particular type of job. It is a job-hunting tool. It introduces you on paper for the prospective employer to see and become interested in your qualifications. The purpose of a personal data sheet is to get you job interviews. Keep your data sheet to one page. Include personal information: your name, address and telephone number. Also include information about your education, previous work experience, the student activities in which you have participated and the special skills you have developed.

Organizing Your Personal Data Sheet

You have identified your educational experience, work experience, skills and abilities, personal characteristics and work preferences. Now, you need to arrange this information to highlight your strengths. Determine what qualifications are most important for the job you desire. Ask yourself these questions:

- ✔ What kind of job am I seeking?
- ✔ Which of my experiences can be related to the job I am seeking?
- ✔ What personal characteristics can be related to the job?
- ✔ What parts of my education make me qualified for the job?

Organize your personal data sheet emphasizing your qualifications. The data sheet on the next page is for people with beginning skills and little or no paid experience. It has two sections—the first section lists skills, and the second provides proof of those skills. Jodi has taken her extensive 4-H meal preparation projects and school achievements, broken the experiences down into marketable skills and has written a personal data sheet that advertises her abilities.

Whether Jodi has held jobs before or not, most employers would be impressed by a youth who is creative, has organizational and management skills and can follow through on difficult projects. Choose the skills you want to emphasize in your personal data sheet, and list them in the “Skills I Can Offer” section. In the next section, present evidence of how the skills were acquired. Avoid selling yourself short, but do not exaggerate. You need to give specific experience for each skill mentioned. Do not just say you are a well-organized manager. Be able to tell what was organized and the results.

Jodi Teenager
3 Clover Drive
Southtown, Tennessee 00010
Telephone: 444-0000

Skills I Can Offer
Food preparation skills; organization; time management; knowledge of nutrition; ability to creatively arrange food items; proven ability to plan and prepare nutritious low-cost foods; leadership; coordinating people.

Evidence
Planned, purchased and prepared foods for family meals for the past three years, including cooking for large groups of relatives. This year's major project: total responsibility for preparing dinner for a family of five Monday through Friday. My breads demonstration won top award at State 4-H Round-up. I handled the management of the junior class's concession sales during basketball season; total gross sales for the season were $5,850. Excellent grades in math, business courses and home economics.

Personal
Age 16; excellent health; will be entering senior year at Community High School in August 1995.

For individuals who have had previous employment, refer to **SP461-C, Preparing a Resume,** for examples of a personal data sheet and resumes which include more detailed information. Work history and education are listed with the most recent experiences first, followed by previous experiences.

With a well-organized personal data sheet, you're way ahead of the average teenage job hunter. You've thought about what you are good at doing, and now you are ready to prove your skills to potential employers. The personal data sheet will help interviewers focus on your experience instead of the lack of it. It will also help you to remember your strong points during an interview.

When you are asked to come for a personal interview, you know that a firm is at least interested in your abilities as a potential employee. During the interview, you have the opportunity to increase the firm's interest in you so they will hire you. Since it may affect your future education and career, the interview is an important moment in your life. It is worth the time to make careful preparation for it. Ask your county Extension agent for **SP 461-F, The Job Interview**. Other job search materials are also available.

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