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ABSTRACT

This instructor guide explains the goals and objectives of "Orientation to the World of Work," a program to help prepare participants for involvement in career decision-making, planning, occupational skills training, and related occupational preparation. It also discusses the organization of materials and implementation procedures. (The program is designed as part of Comprehensive Employment and Training Act training for out-of-school youth and adults and in-school youth.) Areas covered are program contents, use, and instructor role. Suggestions are made for supplementing the program, including topics for group activities on need and motivation, needs that influence job choice, matching needs to careers, and good decision making. (YLB)

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ORIENTATION TO THE WORLD OF WORK

Linda Proyster

Instructor Guide

*Provided by the Technical Assistance for
Occupational Skills Training Project
Sponsored by the Office of Youth Programs,
U.S. Department of Labor*



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Foreword

Orientation to the World of Work is one of sixteen products or services developed for the Department of Labor's Office of Youth Programs. These products and services are intended to comprise a "full-service" technical assistance model that can be used by the employment and training community to better meet the training needs of staff and CETA-eligible youth and adults.

The contributions of the Fort Wayne (Indiana) Area Consortium, Philadelphia Office of Employment and Training, and Kentucky Balance of State Prime Sponsor are gratefully acknowledged. These sites participated in the planning and pilot testing of selected products and services.

Appreciation also is expressed to project staff. Bettina Lankard, Program Associate, was the major author. Other staff members include Brian Fitch, Program Director; Robert Bhaerman, Research Specialist; Sandra Pritz, Program Associate; Gale Zahniser, Program Associate; and William Goldwair, Research Specialist.

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What is the Orientation to the World of Work program?

Orientation to the World of Work is a program to help prepare participants for enthusiastic involvement in career decision making, planning, occupational skills training, and related occupational preparation. It is designed to acquaint participants with factors that influence their abilities to find and retain jobs that are personally satisfying and rewarding to them. The program is intended for use by participants who have little or no understanding of work or the purpose for working.

Not all participants are motivated to work, at least not for an extended period of time. Many, while motivated, are motivated to do work that is illegal, e.g., push drugs, steal, and so forth. This program helps participants examine basic needs that are common to all people and identify the personal needs they might satisfy through responsible work.

Participants learn how to match their personal needs with job facts, such as job requirements, job responsibilities, education and training requirements, working conditions, employment outlook, salary, and potential for advancement. They learn how to determine whether a given job can or cannot satisfy their personal needs.

While each individual's set of needs influences his or her career choices, the priority placed on each need is often the determining factor in job selection. Participants are led to establish priorities in their lives by considering both short-term and long-term effects of their decisions. They are guided to use this information as a basis for ongoing decision making.

What are the contents?

Orientation to the World of Work contains these materials:

- Instructor Guide

This guide explains the goals and objectives of Orientation to the World of Work, the organization of materials, and implementation procedures.

- Program Booklet

This booklet contains these section titles:

- What motivates you and other people to work?
- What needs will influence your career choices?
- What facts will help you match your needs to a career?
- How can you make good decisions?

How is it packaged?

Orientation to the World of Work is packaged in two booklets.

- The instructor guide is nonconsumable.
- The program booklet is consumable.

How is it used?

Participants read each section of their program booklets, reflecting on and answering questions presented in the text.

There are opportunities for group discussion so that participants might gain greater perspective about the topics they are exploring.

In supplementary group activities, the instructor and counselor present additional questions to stimulate further discussion of the topics.

When, where, and how often is it used?

Orientation to the World of Work should be offered as part of CETA training for out-of-school CETA-eligible youth and adults and for in-school youth as well.

The materials are designed for flexibility. They can be presented to participants to use individually and at their own pace. They can also be presented to an entire classroom of participants for a given time each day.

The estimated time for this program is 20 hours. This time can be divided into two weeks of two-hour days--or one week of four-hour days. Participants need time to think about the concepts presented and to discuss their ideas with you, the counselor, and with other participants, so structure the time accordingly.

What is your role?

In addition to facilitating each participant's use of this program, your primary roles are . . .

- to create an environment in which reflection and discussion can occur,
- to help the participant understand the ways in which meaningful work can be important to all members of society . . . ways in which it can satisfy personal needs and wants,
- to work directly with participants and their counselors for ongoing assessment of participants as it relates to their Employability Development Plans (EDPs).

Familiarize yourself with the program and instructional materials so you thoroughly understand the concepts as they are presented.

Encourage participants to be as honest and candid as possible in their written answers to questions in the program booklet. Lead them to understand that their privacy will be respected and maintained.

Provide opportunities for group discussion. Use the questions in the program booklet. Supplement with the activities on pages 4 to 10 of this guide. Participants may choose to share as much as they wish in the group activities.

In order to provide a nonthreatening atmosphere and to encourage an open exchange of feelings, some group rules should be established.

Ask the group to establish their own rules for interaction. Have the rules come from the group rather than from you. Some examples of typical "group" rules for interaction are . . .

- everyone must participate,
- name calling or other actions demeaning to a person are prohibited,
- everyone is free to express feelings, thoughts, and opinions without receiving criticism.

The important thing is to demonstrate that many different opinions or viewpoints are acceptable on a particular topic. No one opinion or viewpoint is right or wrong.

How can you supplement the program?

You can initiate additional types of group activities to supplement those in the program booklet. The use of such group activities has several benefits:

- A variety of group activities stimulates interest in the individual activities.
- Informal discussions can help participants to be honest with themselves. For some individuals, the process of examining one's needs, values, and other aspects of the self can be an uncomfortable experience. Interaction with others who are dealing with the same process can make this experience less overwhelming and enable the participants to be more realistic in assessing themselves.
- Group activities can be carefully chosen to reinforce the learning that is taking place through individual work. Participants who are having trouble understanding a concept can resolve the difficulty in the group discussion before proceeding.

If possible, include a counselor in the activities. The presence of the counselor is important for several reasons:

- The perspective of the counselor--who may have more familiarity with career options, educational options, placement, and other topics--is vital.

*The material that follows on pages 4 through 9 was adapted from Catherine C. King-Fitch, Career Planning System, Senior High School Level. (Columbus: The National Center for Research in Vocational Education, The Ohio State University, 1977).

- The presence of two leaders will facilitate simultaneous small-group activity.
- The counselor may have access to resource people, guidance publications and films, testing materials, and other supplementary materials that will be useful in conducting the program.
- It is important that participants become acquainted with the counselor as someone who can facilitate effective planning. This is an important outgrowth of this activity and will encourage constructive use of the guidance function during and after participation in the program and particularly during assessment for the EDP (Employability Development Plan).

A variety of group discussion questions are included in the participants' program booklets. These questions are keyed to the topics that are presented. Additional types of group activities are included on the next pages of this guide. They are listed under the topics (or section titles) to which they relate.

The abundance and variety of activities will make it easier for you to select appropriate activities for the participants. If desirable, two or more activities can be selected and conducted at the same time with small groups of participants, since not all participants will be addressing the same topics at the same time. Ask a counselor to assist you in this endeavor.

WHAT MOTIVATES YOU AND OTHER PEOPLE TO WORK?

1. Discuss the concept of needs. Present these questions.
 - a. Do you agree with the explanations of basic needs?
 - b. Do your needs exist in the order shown in the activity? If not, how do they differ?
 - c. Can you tell what needs motivate you? What about unconscious needs--needs that are triggered by some event or experience in your life but which you rarely attribute to that experience?
 - d. Why don't satisfied needs motivate people?

2. Describe situations in your own life when you were motivated by the five needs. Ask participants to do the same. Sharing about yourself will help participants feel more comfortable with you and the group and also more willing to share.
3. Have participants conduct a survey of family, friends, instructors, and other significant people in their lives, asking what will be or has been the most motivating need in their lives. Pool the findings and learn which needs are most frequently at the top of the list.

WHAT NEEDS WILL INFLUENCE YOUR CAREER CHOICE?

1. Discuss the topic of values.* Help participants understand that identified needs reflect values and that values influence decisions.
 - a. Where do values come from? (Values come from society or culture. They are learned from parents, teachers, other significant adults or role models, and, to some extent, from peers.) Parental influence is great.
 - b. What are some areas in which we typically draw upon our values?

politics	culture (music,	health
religion	art, literature)	rules, authority
work	friends	interpersonal
leisure time	material possessions	relations
education	personal tastes	family
love, sex	money	

*In a discussion of values, participants might be apt to voice opinions and answers they think the instructor expects. Therefore, make an effort to accept all statements without judging their worth. Even the most antisocial opinions should be accepted at face value.

Nonacceptance can be transmitted in many ways, including body language, facial expression, tone of voice, and eye movement. Statements can be accepted by listening carefully and then simply clarifying what was said ("You said that you felt . . .") or by actually implying some acceptance ("I can understand how you might feel that way.").

c. What happens when one person's values are not consistent with the values of society?

d. Do you think that you have any values that are a hindrance?

2. Discuss any differences between what younger people and older people identify as important personal needs. Ask participants to survey a number of people of different age groups--family, friends, neighbors, and so forth.
3. Discuss in what ways careers do and do not satisfy people.

WHAT FACTS WILL HELP YOU MATCH YOUR NEEDS TO A CAREER?

1. Discuss reasons why gathering facts is important in any decision-making process.
2. Ask participants to talk with each other, family members, friends, and others. Have them find out about situations when lack of information caused someone to make decisions they later regretted. Have the participants discuss their findings with the group.
3. Identify and explain sources of information participants can use when making career decisions, such as the Occupational Outlook Handbook and Encyclopedia of Careers. Find out what's available for participants in your library.

HOW CAN YOU MAKE GOOD DECISIONS?

1. Identify a problem situation that you think is appropriate for the group to examine. Divide the participants into small groups. Give each group the problem and ask them to apply the decision-making steps. When they finish, compare the alternatives, sources of information, identified needs, values used; projected consequences, choices, plans, and general approaches of the groups. Discuss how the groups acted differently or similarly. Explain what might have caused the differences. (One example you might present here is the case of a person who is trying to decide between illegal kinds of work and lawful types of employment.)

2. Present the following theory about risk taking in decision making.

Some people feel that there are four basic strategies or approaches to risk taking:

Wish strategy--Choosing the alternative that might lead to the most desirable result, regardless of risk.

Safe strategy--Choosing the alternative that is most likely to bring success.

Escape strategy--Choosing the alternative that is most likely to avoid the worst result.

Combination strategy--Choosing the alternative that has both high probability (safe strategy) and high desirability (wish strategy).

Discuss the strategies. Sample discussion questions follow.

- a. Do you agree that these strategies apply to the way people approach risk?
- b. Can you think of any approaches not included here?
- c. Have you used any of the strategies? Describe the situations in which you used each kind.
- d. Do you think a person uses one kind of strategy or different ones in different situations?
- e. Do you think such categories of approach are useful?
- f. Do you think a person can control the way he or she approaches risk? What are the implications for career choice if a person can't control it?

Ask participants to describe a significant choice they have made in which there was risk involved. Ask them to describe the alternatives, the risks, and the choices made.

- a. Discuss ways that on-the-job decisions involve weighing consequences and calculating risks.
- b. What are some strong motivators in deciding whether or not to take risks?

4. Ask the group to share some of the decisions they have had to make in which they weighed consequences and risks. Have them say if they feel that their final decisions were influenced by their identified needs. Ask them to give specific examples.
5. Present the following theory about decision-making strategies.

A strategy is a plan of action. A decision-making strategy is a plan for making a decision or solving a problem. When you put all the steps together to solve the problem, you are using a strategy.

A strategy is not good or bad or right or wrong. Different strategies are used at different times and in different situations by different people.

These are some decision-making strategies:

Planning--Using a plan that will bring satisfying results. Balancing emotion and reason. Weighing the facts.

Impulsive--Taking the first alternative. Using little thought. Not examining the facts. ("Jumping off the deep end.")

Compliant--Following someone else's plans. Letting someone else decide. ("I don't care--whatever you want.")

Delaying--Putting off a decision. Postponing thinking about it. ("I'll cross that bridge when I come to it.")

Paralysis--Knowing you have to decide but being unable to do it. Being unable to face up to it.

Fatalistic--Leaving it to chance or fate. What will be, will be. ("It's all in the cards." "Let the chips fall where they may.")

Agonizing--Being overwhelmed by all the alternatives. Getting lost in the data. ("I don't know which way to turn.")

Intuitive--Doing what feels right without examining it. Basing a decision on some inexplicable sense. ("I don't know why, but it just feels right.")

Discuss the decision-making strategies and ask participants to describe situations in which they have used some of them. Use these discussion questions:

- a. Do you agree with these descriptions?
 - b. Can you think of any approaches not included here?
 - c. Have you made decisions that do not fit into any of these categories? What categories would you add?
 - d. What strategies have been most effective for you?
6. Present the following theory about commitment and how it affects decision making.

One theorist believes that choices are like steps that cannot be retraced. By making choices, one builds commitments. One starts a motion in a certain direction. Then it becomes more and more difficult to change direction. This makes each decision very important to one's future.

Discuss these questions:

- a. Do you agree with this theory?
- b. How does this theory relate to your experiences? Have you made decisions that have resulted in a sense of commitment? If so, what were they?
- c. Are there directions that you feel you could not take at this point because of decisions you made earlier?

Discuss as a group how an individual can "check out" his or her commitments.

- a. How do people know they are truly committed to something?
- b. How are commitments related to goals?
- c. What do actions say to other people? What do they tell other people about you?

Ask each person to answer the following questions by listing the questions and their answers on a sheet of paper. Ask them to keep the list for reference.

- a. To whom and what are you committed at the present time?
- b. What commitments are you ready to eliminate?
- c. What commitments are you ready to add?