



GIRLS' SUCCESS

MENTORING GUIDE ON Transitioning Girls from School to Work

3

 **AED**
Ideas Changing Lives

CENTER FOR GENDER EQUITY

ABOUT THE AED CENTER FOR GENDER EQUITY

The AED Center for Gender Equity promotes the rights of girls and women to education, health, a safe environment, economic participation, and leadership. It analyzes gender-related issues and advocates for the mobilization of leaders and institutions in support of gender equity. The Center is recognized for innovation in the field of girls' education and for expanding the knowledge base on gender perspectives.

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Girls' Success:



MENTORING GUIDE ON

Transitioning Girls from School to Work

2011

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Acknowledgements

It is with great pleasure that we are publishing volume three of AED's mentoring guides for girls' success. This volume, *Girls' Success: Mentoring Guide for Transitioning Girls from School to Work*, focuses on a very important step in young women's journey toward realizing their full potential and securing a better future for themselves, their families and their communities. School-to-work transitions are complex and hold many challenges; young women in particular are vulnerable to underemployment, low wages, job insecurity and a high risk of exploitation. This guide aspires to provide information, advice and support to help young women move beyond these barriers and realize their career aspirations.

The development of this mentoring guide was a collaborative process; engaging AED staff working on a range of projects to bring forward the experience, lessons learned and best practices of both our home office and field staff. I would like to express my appreciation to the AED staff who contributed to this volume—their commitment to girls' success is inspirational. I thank the primary authors, Liza Barron and Andrea Bertone, as well as two other contributors and editors, Christine Beggs and Cory Heyman. Importantly, I would like to recognize the work of the AED staff in Tanzania; Lilian Tarimo, Laura Mrukwamba, Fatma Waziri and the many committed mentors who field tested the guide and provided invaluable feedback about enhancements and additions. I also thank Anne Quito for the attractive and user-friendly design. I am deeply grateful to all.

Note to our Readers:

This guide is a work in progress. It is an organic and dynamic document that will change and improve through field tests and feedback from mentors and girls and boys. We welcome your comments and suggestions.

Finally, this guide was inspired by the girls of Africa who strive to improve their lives and the lives of their families and communities by pursuing education and seeking guidance. This guide is for mentors in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East who dedicate themselves to enhancing the lives of the girls and boys, young women and young men in their countries. Advancing girls' success worldwide is what drives the authors and contributors of this series of guides.



M. Rihani

May Rihani
Senior Vice President
Director of the Global Learning Group



A young girl with dark skin and short hair is looking towards the camera. She is holding a book in her hands. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

Contents

About this Guide	1
I. Mentoring for Girls' Success	3
1. Mentoring for Success	5
2. Planning Mentoring Sessions and Activities	7
II. Preparing for a Career	11
1. Planning a Career	15
2. Setting Goals and Creating Action Plans	19
3. Dealing with Change	22
4. Being a Young Woman	25
III. Developing Employability Skills	27
1. Having a Positive Attitude	28
2. Strengthening Communication Skills	32
3. Developing Other Employability Skills	37
IV. Looking for Work	43
1. Preparing a Résumé or a Curriculum Vitae (CV)	45
2. Preparing a Cover Letter	48
3. Identifying Resources to Find a Job	52
4. Applying for a Job	56
5. Interviewing for a Job	58

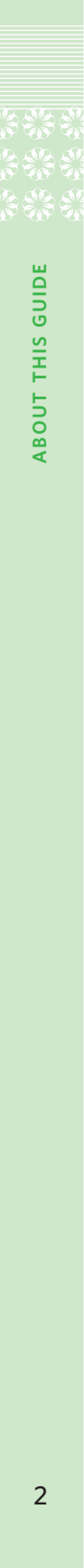
V.	Starting a New Job	63
1.	Communicating Well with Coworkers and Supervisors	64
2.	Dressing for the Job	66
3.	Managing Expectations between Employees and Employers	68
4.	Addressing Sexual Harassment and Violence in the Workplace	72
VI.	Building a Business of One's Own	75
1.	Creating Start-up Checklists and Longer-term Plans	77
2.	Creating a Budget	78
3.	Finding Resources to Start a Business	83
4.	Identifying Suppliers and Customers	88
5.	Employing and Supervising Others	91
6.	Tracking Progress over Time	93
VII.	Personal Finance	97
1.	Saving Money	98
2.	Spending Money	99
VIII.	Developing a Successful Career	102
1.	Assuming More Responsibility	104
2.	Taking Leadership Roles	105
3.	Taking the Next Career Step	107
4.	Balancing Work with Family	109
IX.	Appendix	
	Example CV for Recent Secondary School Graduate	114

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

Thank you for choosing to be a mentor! You have a unique opportunity to help girls achieve success in their lives by supporting and guiding them. This is one of the best ways that a woman can help the girls in her community. You are joining other women in your country and around the world who believe that girls can be just as successful in life as boys.

School-to-work transitions hold both great challenges and great opportunities—especially for girls. The challenges can be overcome and the opportunities expanded with the proper information and support. To this end, we have created this guide to help girls set goals, create action plans, build employability and entrepreneurial skills, and harness the available resources to make their career aspirations a reality. Mentoring girls on their transition from school is very important and can help to create more productive, empowered and secure futures for young women, their families and their communities.

The work of a mentor may be life changing for certain girls. Growing up can be hard for anyone. In many places, growing up is even harder for a girl. You were asked to be a mentor because you yourself know this well. Through life's lessons, you have learned wisdom and gained inner strength. The girls you mentor will need guidance, love, support, and kindness in their journey to becoming women. They will need wisdom like yours.



Mentoring girls is a challenge. Girls will come to you with hard questions and great hope. Sometimes you will be able to help make their lives better; other times you will feel that you have not done very much. In times when you are feeling down, think that success is not about one mentoring session or one talk with a girl. Mentoring is about building trust over a long period of time. If you care about the girls and follow through with the promises that you make to them, you will be successful in helping them to improve their lives.

Think about mentoring as a journey. This series of *Girls' Success Mentoring Guides* is a tool to help you in your journey. These *Guides* serve as road maps for mentors. They provide ideas for helping girls as they go through school and become young adults. The *Guides* are not meant to be read from start to finish. Instead, they are meant to be read between mentoring sessions to help your planning. They are meant to give you basic information to share with girls, but just as importantly, to give you ideas about how to talk with girls about issues that are important to them. Girls will learn a lot from their mentors as well as from each other. You might be surprised about how much you also will learn from the girls in the process.

Remember that a guide is only meant to give ideas. It is up to mentors and their girls to make the sessions meaningful for everyone. Instead of reading facts from the *Guide* or asking the *Guide's* questions directly, it is better to use the *Guide* just to start your thinking. Ask girls to find out more about topics from the *Guide*—or ask them to find information about other topics that are just as important to them. Think about different activities you can do to help girls understand the main points.

Best wishes to you and to the girls whose lives you will touch.



I.

MENTORING FOR GIRLS' SUCCESS

Part I of this Guide includes an introduction to mentoring, a discussion of the goals of mentoring and some ideas to make mentoring activities successful for young women and rewarding for the mentor.

A mentor is a female role model from the community. A “role model” is someone whom young women can admire and look up to because she leads a successful life, contributing to her family and community. A mentor spends time with each young woman individually or in a group to make sure that they do well in school, are healthy and happy, and are helpful to their families and communities.

A mentor can be a mother, a young woman, a religious leader, a community leader, or a professional woman in any field. A mentor is willing to do what she can to help young women succeed.

Here are some things that mentors do:

- A mentor is a “role model” because she is successful and lives her life in a positive, constructive way.
- A mentor helps young women develop the skills to make good choices.
- Although a mentor is not necessarily a teacher or tutor, a mentor encourages good study habits and skills.



What is Success?

Success can mean many things. It can mean completing school, getting a good job, being a good wife and mother, or helping the community.

Why is mentoring important for young women?

Girls begin to mature into young women when they are in secondary school. During this time, young women benefit from information that they may not hear from their parents or teachers. When young women receive information that will help them make good decisions about all aspects of their life, they are more likely to stay in school, take care of themselves, and be successful in future activities, whether that is raising a family, being a community leader, or having a job and a career.

Mentoring has many goals that change depending upon the situation and the young women's needs. The goal of this *Guide* is to help make a successful transition from secondary school to work and/or entrepreneurial activities by: increasing their knowledge about career options; improving their employability skills, and creating plans for the future — taking their own interests, talents and goals into consideration.

How do mentoring programs for girls help everyone?

- Mentoring helps parents to raise daughters who are more informed about their families' needs and can better support their families' health and well-being.
- Mentoring teaches how young women can help their communities fight poverty, violence and abuse.

1. Mentoring for Success

The goal of mentoring is for a respected and successful woman from a community to meet regularly with young women to discuss important issues. Mentoring takes place most often in group sessions, but mentors can also meet individually with young women to discuss more specific subjects. Mentoring sessions allow young women to ask questions freely of mentors and each other and talk openly about their thoughts and feelings.



Mentors should not try to be teachers or parents. Instead, mentors should play the role of a trusted older role model who can raise issues to think about, answer questions based on knowledge and life experience, and encourage young women with softer voices to join the conversation. Through mentoring, young women should feel strong about themselves.

What makes mentors successful?

It is not difficult to be a good mentor if one follows a few important guidelines:

- **Listen!** A good mentor listens and helps girls feel comfortable enough to talk openly. A good listener does not interrupt or judge what young women are saying. She values girls' feelings and ideas. A mentor asks questions to encourage girls to speak out.
- **Share!** A good mentor also shares stories about her experiences. These stories should not only be about successes but also about hardship and challenges.

- ***Do not judge or pick favorites!*** By not judging the girls, a mentor helps them feel safe to share new ideas without fear of making mistakes.
- ***Build trust!*** It is very important that mentors do not share private information from girls with others. However, sometimes a mentor might feel that a girl is in danger or might be abused. In one of the first meetings with girls, the mentor should inform girls that if she believes the girl is in danger, she might share information with another person.
- ***Do not expect gifts!*** Mentors should never ask for money or gifts from girls, girls' families, or anyone else in the community.
- ***Be dependable!*** A mentor is faithful in carrying out her mentoring duties.
- ***Give wise counsel!*** A good mentor gives clear guidance to girls. She does not make choices for girls or tell them what to do.
- ***Have fun!*** A good mentor enjoys mentoring and spending time with girls. The girls will know by her speech and actions that their mentor is happy to spend time with them.



2. Planning Mentoring Sessions and Activities

When a mentor is just starting, she should first meet with as many young women and their families as possible. In these meetings, the mentor can share the goals of the mentoring program with families and answer any questions that families might have. Mentors should also ask for commitments from families to let their daughter participate in the mentoring program and to support her work with the mentor. Depending upon the community and family situation, the mentor may want to meet with families one at a time or in small groups.

Meetings with young women are opportunities to learn what young women expect from mentoring and what topics might interest the young women. That information will help the mentor plan for her first few mentoring sessions. In addition, mentors should try to think about the following questions:

- What is the best group size for mentoring sessions to ensure participation by all young women?
- How often does it make sense to hold mentoring sessions given the goals of the program?
- When are the best times for young women to attend mentoring sessions?
- Where can meetings be held so young women can participate easily? Is the meeting place big enough for the number of young women in the mentoring group? Is it safe, with sufficient privacy? Is it a good idea to hold meetings in different places over time?
- Which topics or activities are best for the whole group? Do some young women have special needs or topics they do not want to talk about in front of the group? Is there a chance to meet with each young woman alone from time to time?

- What are good rules that everyone in the group should follow, such as respecting what others think and feel—their “opinions”? Are there ways to include the young women in the development of these rules? What activities give young women the chance to think about issues that are important to them? Since everyone learns differently, what are different ways of sharing the same information?

Planning a mentoring session

After answering these questions, it is time to plan the topic for the first mentoring session. You may want to prepare for this by selecting 3-4 topics and ask the young women to select which topics should be discussed first.

1. Write in a few words what the topic will be.
2. Write what the young women should learn. List the information, skills, or ideas that the young women should know once the meeting is over. Keep the list to just a few items, and make sure the items are clear and to the point.
3. Make a list of everything that needs to be done before the meeting. For example, draw pictures to illustrate a topic, contact a guest speaker, or arrange a meeting place.
4. Think about how the topic will be presented and what activities will be used to help teach the main points. Use storytelling, a picture, a poem, or other way to get young women interested.

This is only one way of preparing for a mentoring session. A mentor should prepare in a way that works best for her. After the first few mentoring sessions, planning will become much easier and mentors will be on the road to building trust with girls that will help the girls grow.



Encourage different ways of learning by:

- Having girls take turns choosing the topics for the sessions. The girl who chooses the topic can also lead the session to build leadership.
- Dividing girls into small groups and have each group become an 'expert' about different sides of a topic. The groups can then debate the topic and learn more about different points of view.

Other ideas for activities are given throughout this *Guide*.

Who else can be involved in mentoring?

Many others in the community can support the young women's mentoring. In fact, the goals set by a mentor for her group are more easily met if others in the community understand and support the goals as well. A mentor can ask members of the community to be guest speakers at mentoring meetings. There are at least three groups in the community who should support mentoring sessions.

The first group is parents and guardians. It is very important that mothers, fathers, and guardians understand the important role that mentoring will play in the lives of the young women. If parents and guardians are supportive, they will encourage their daughters to attend the meetings. Involving parents also helps mothers and fathers learn about issues that they may have missed growing up if they themselves did not have the benefit of an adult mentor. You may want to meet with parents to brainstorm about ways that parents can support their children's education. Sharing information with parents about how girls' education helps communities and families live healthier lives with more economic opportunities will help to get parents engaged in the mentoring activities.

The second group is teachers and school leaders. When teachers and school leaders are involved, mentors come to know what the young women are studying and what they are finding difficult in school. Teachers learn that mentors can be a good communication bridge to parents and families when young women need more help. The focus of these activities should be on how the teachers and school leaders can support the young women in their success at school and their school-to-work transition. If a school has a Career Guidance Coordinator or Committee, mentors should reach out to these groups and find ways to work together on mentoring sessions dedicated to career planning.

The third group is men and boys. In many places, men are the main decision makers in the community, and they make a difference in how the community thinks about girls' education. Community leaders who are men can make sure that mentors have the resources they need to run the mentoring sessions. They can also encourage the school head masters, who are often men, to support educating young women through mentoring sessions. During the year, it is important to hold some mentoring sessions for boys alone so that they do not feel left out. During these mentoring sessions, boys can brainstorm ideas about what young women can do when given equal opportunities to receive an education. You may want to consider having some sessions with boys and girls to talk about how being a boy and being a girl affects in their school experience. Boys and girls can work together to think of ideas that make their school a welcome and comfortable environment for everyone.



II.

PREPARING FOR A CAREER

Section II of this Guide is focused on the first steps of preparing for a career and the differences between jobs and a career. The information is meant to help young women reflect on their own strengths and interests as they develop their career plans and to support young women as they transition from school to work. Dealing with change and understanding how being a young woman impacts the transition from school to work is also discussed in this section.

By the time young women are ready to leave school, they have already been working their whole lives. Maybe they have never been paid for the work they do, but as soon as girls are old enough to carry water, cook bread, or care for a young brother or sister, they have worked and have had responsibilities every single day. Helping out the family is very important, but young women can contribute even more to their families if they begin to pursue a career.

Getting a job that pays money often means that young women become more independent from their families. They are able to make decisions themselves about life choices such as where to live, whom to marry, and when to have children. One of the important goals of school is to give young women enough knowledge to understand their choices. The longer a young woman stays in school, the better able she will be to determine the kind of work she wants to do. She will also have more choices in terms of the kind of work available to her. One of the important

roles for mentors is to help young women stay in school and to work hard in their studies so they can achieve their goals. More education also means that young women can find work that offers more money because she is more skilled. When an adolescent girl is educated, individuals and society benefit. The following statistics show how important girls' education is:

- With at least seven years of education, girls in developing countries delay marriage by four years and have on average two fewer children.
- With each successive year of primary education, a young woman's ability to earn money from a job increases by 10–20 percent. If she stays in secondary school, her ability to earn is increased even more.
- Women and girls spend their earnings on their families, allocating about 90% to their families' needs.¹

Mentors may hear young women say that they do not understand why math, history, or another subject is important for their future. The truth is that young women do not always know while they are in school how some knowledge or skills may be helpful later in life. A young woman who is interested in becoming a journalist might change her mind and decide to become a chemist after learning about chemistry in school.

Or, perhaps that same young woman achieves her dream to become a journalist, but then decides to pursue a different career later in life that requires another set of knowledge and skills. All of the knowledge we gain in school helps us in life and expands our potential opportunities.

Sometimes a young woman who really enjoys school may have to put aside her studies because of other life demands. She might be asked to take care of a sick relative, take time from school to harvest crops or tend to the family business, or be pressured to stop school after getting married or becoming pregnant. Mentors hear



Mentors might think about their own school experiences and tell their group about how lessons in different subject areas have helped them in their lives.

¹ UN Foundation, GirlUp Fact Sheet.



many stories like these from young women who are forced to leave school early, even though they would like to continue their studies. In these cases, mentors can play an important role in talking with the young woman’s parents, guardians, or husbands about the value of keeping girls and young women in school. Mentors must continue to remind families that investing in girls’ education leads to greater longer-term rewards for everyone—even if there are some short-term sacrifices. In addition to supporting young women and giving them the confidence to complete school, mentors can play an important role in helping young women plan for their future careers. Planting the seeds of excitement can begin even with girls in the first few grades of school. Young women should know from the beginning of their education that they can do anything. They can become anything they want in

life—even President! Women around the world have succeeded in every professional role that a young woman can imagine. All young women should learn to think BIG about their futures and work hard to make their plans a reality. One way to help young women plan is to talk with them regularly about the differences between “jobs” and “careers.” A job is work that one does simply to earn an income or support one’s family. Young women will learn and grow from every single job experience. Even if someone does not particularly enjoy her job, she should still see it as an opportunity to build the skills that she will need for future jobs. It is important for young women to understand that any job can become a career. While a young woman is in school, her career is to be a student—the best student she can be. She needs to treat school as a major responsibility and each lesson as a chance to develop her own understanding of the world.

When young women start planning their careers, they think about longer-term goals—goals that go beyond the income earned from a job. In a career, a young woman increases her experiences and responsibilities over time. She thinks constantly about what she is doing and how she can do it better. She earns an income or supports her family, but that is only one of the benefits. She also feels personally fulfilled and proud of what she is doing. She feels as though she is making a greater contribution to herself, her family, and her community. She has a goal to earn more responsibilities and to become a leader in her field. Her work matters to herself, and to others.



1. Planning a Career

Some children are expected to follow the same jobs or careers as their parents. There are many reasons for this: the parents want children to carry on a specific tradition that has been passed on for many generations, or parents are not aware of other opportunities for their children because they themselves have not attended school.

Other children may hear the question: *“What do you want to be when you grow up?”* When adults ask this question, they are not expecting children to commit to a particular career. Instead, they are encouraging children to become excited to think about their futures.

Children often respond with interesting answers, and their answers might change frequently because they become interested in many different things. It is important to encourage young women to have high hopes when they think about the opportunities available to them so that they grow up understanding that no career is impossible to achieve. Young women may have been taught things like sewing, cooking, and cleaning when they were little girls, but they can also have any job that men can have. An old Chinese saying proclaims, *“women hold up half the sky.”*² Mentors should encourage young women to be fearless and to pursue their biggest dreams—after all; they can hold up the sky!



Throughout her career, a young woman will make decisions about what jobs to pursue and what skills to develop based on her interests, goals, and ambitions.

² Kristof, Nicholas and WuDunn, Sheryl. *“The Women’s Crusade.”* The New York Times. Aug 17 2009. <[15](http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/23/magazine/23Women-t.html#></p></div><div data-bbox=)

Mentors can help young women define their short-term goals (things that they want to accomplish in the next few months or years) and their long-term goals (things that they want to accomplish in their careers or in their lives). Everyone's goals change throughout their lives, but it helps people to keep their short-term and long-term goals in mind as they face different decisions. Once mentors help young women to identify their goals, they can begin to advise them on what steps they can take to meet their goals.

Turning strengths and interests into a career

When people are ready to start a career, they should think about three things: their strengths, their interests, and their goals. It is important for everyone to answer the following questions:

- What am I good at doing?
- What am I interested in?
- What do I enjoy doing?
- What do I want to accomplish in my life?
- What skills do I want to develop?

Every person has different answers to these questions. Sometimes people take jobs that do not use all of their strengths. Sometimes people take jobs that they do not enjoy very much. However, these jobs can still fulfill the short-term goals of making money and learning new skills. Mentors should explain that for every job, there is an opportunity to learn something that will help them find work in the future that does match their interests and goals. It is very common that young people do not know exactly what they want to do later in life. The first step to answer that tough question "What do you want to be when you grow up?" is for young women to think about their long-term goals. Young women should imagine their "dream job," which is the job that they would most like to have, even if it seems impossible or out of reach. Young women should know that no job is out of reach for them, and that they should always work to reach their "dream job." Knowing their final goal will allow young women to look for the jobs that can teach them the skills and knowledge that they will need for their "dream job." When young women follow their dreams and look for jobs that will help them reach their ideal position, they have made a career out of their interests.



QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. What is the difference between short-term goals and long-term goals? What are some examples of each?
2. What are some examples of strengths and weaknesses? How can young women use their strengths to identify jobs that might be interesting and/or appropriate for them?
3. What are the jobs that women can do? Are there any jobs that women cannot do? Why do some young women have the idea that some jobs are out of reach for them?



Activity for mentoring session: "DISCUSSING A JOB VERSUS A CAREER"

Mentors can lead a discussion to help the young women in the group understand the differences between a job and a career. It might help for mentors to address gender differences too. They can ask questions like the following:

- What are some jobs people do?
- What are some careers for men? For women?
- Can women and men have the same careers? If so, what are the skills needed for certain careers? If men and women cannot have the same careers, why not?



Activity for mentoring session: "MATCHING SKILLS AND EDUCATION WITH PROFESSIONS"

Mentors can lead the young women in a brainstorming session about the different types of professions. After making a list of many different professions, the group can identify which skills (general and specialized) are required for these careers and what level of education is necessary.

**Longer activity: “INTERVIEWS OF COMMUNITY MEMBERS”**

Ask each young woman to interview someone in the community who has a job that interests her. The person may be a man or a woman. The people interviewed should have different jobs so that the young women learn about different work opportunities available in the community. These can be people who work for companies or people who own their own business. The mentor should suggest that the young women ask their “interviewees”—the people who are being interviewed—how they started their careers, how they found their jobs, why they picked that particular job, what they like and dislike about it, if the job allows them to use their strengths and interests, and a variety of other questions.





2. Setting Goals and Creating Action Plans

Setting goals is very important in life. This skill is used over and over again as we grow, take on new responsibilities, discover new opportunities and look for new challenges in life. Even though people's goals will be different, there are some guidelines that everyone can use to make their goal setting successful. It is important that young women set their goals individually and do not influence each other in their goal setting. The young women should be encouraged to set both short-term and longer-term goals. Mentors should provide guidance to young women using the following goal setting criteria:



- SPECIFIC:** Is the goal specific, clear, and well-defined?
- MEASURABLE:** Can the goal be measured? Are there ways to check on the progress of meeting the goal?
- ATTAINABLE:** Is it possible to achieve the goal? It is good for goals to require a lot of effort, but they should also be reachable.
- RELEVANT:** Does this goal help meet longer term goals in life?
- TIME BOUND:** Does your goal have a specific start date and deadline?

Creating your goals and writing them down is a very important step, but it is only the first step in goal setting. Once young women have written down their goals, they should be encouraged to create written action plans so that they have a roadmap for how they will meet their goals. A good way to start creating an action

plan is to work “backwards” from the goal. For example, for a goal of getting a job in a certain field, young women might want to think about all the things they can do to make that goal a reality and set deadlines for each activity. The following table provides some ideas:

GOAL:	ACTIVITIES: (PARTIAL LIST)	DEADLINES:
<p><i>Get a job with an organization in the health field.</i></p>	Find information about organizations in the health field in my area.	February 1
	Talk with parents, friends, neighbors, mentors and teachers about people they know in the health field. Keep a list of these people and their contact information.	February 1
	Find out what skills I need for jobs that I am interested in.	February 15
	Identify training/skill building availability in my community.	February 25
	Create a CV and Cover Letter that highlight my relevant skills.	March 1
	Check with organizations for internship and job opportunities and how to apply.	March 15
	Contact all of the people on my contact sheet and let them know that I am ready to apply for internships and jobs and request their assistance.	March 15
	Send in customized Cover Letters and CVs to organizations.	March 18



Mentors should also talk with young women about having flexibility in their decision making. It is best to have a number of career ideas so that they can pursue many opportunities until the one that best fits their interests, skills and opportunities becomes available.



Activity for mentoring session: "CREATING ACTION PLANS TO MEET GOALS"

Using the goal setting form above, mentors can help young women to develop their own goals and action plans. Ask each young woman to identify several goals, some long-term and some short-term related to her job search and career goals. The mentor may want to start this activity in small groups of young women who are interested in the same career path, but take care to make sure the young women are setting their own unique goals that reflect their interests and priorities.

Checklist for Setting Goals

- Are the goals written down?

- Are the goals made up of positive statements?

- Do the goals have as much detail as possible?

- Does the goal-setter have control over achieving the goals?

- Do the goals reflect the goal-setter's personal strengths and interests?


- Are the goals prioritized in order of importance?

3. Dealing with Change

Adolescent girls deal with a lot of change—especially as they near completion of secondary school. There are changes within themselves, changes with their responsibilities, and changes to their expectations. It is natural for young women to feel more uncertain during this time because of the decisions and changes that lie ahead. A mentor can support young women during this transition by helping them understand that it is okay to feel uncertain about the future and to give them tools to manage this uncertainty and deal with their feelings. It is important to acknowledge these feelings without losing focus on setting goals and creating action plans for their life after secondary school.



Another very important way to deal with change is to have flexibility and stay strong. Flexibility allows young women to alter their plans and expectations when things do not go as planned—without giving up, being too hard on themselves, or lowering their expectations for the future. It is helpful to encourage young women to identify a number of goals so that they can change their efforts if one goal is not possible to achieve for reasons out of their control.



Quick tips for young women to deal with stress and create flexibility:

- They should have some fun! Spending time with friends and family doing activities that they enjoy is very important — even during busy times.
- Girls should consider their goals and see if there are people who can help them meet their goals.
- They should re-evaluate their expectations and make sure that they are realistic. Encourage the girls to make a list of what they have accomplished and be proud of their successes.
- Girls should focus on things that they can control.
- Talking with a trusted friend, mentor or family member about concerns can help girls manage their stress.
- Mentors can remind girls that life has many stages and that we learn something important from each one of them — especially the stages that are most challenging!



Activity for mentoring session:

“BUILDING FLEXIBILITY AND SKILLS TO DEAL WITH CHANGE”

Using the “Quick tips for dealing with stress and creating flexibility” ideas above, lead a group discussion to identify challenges and concerns that young women in secondary school have, and share ideas about ways to deal with challenges and address concerns.



4. Being a Young Woman

Mentors may want to talk with young women about how being a young woman affects their decisions, experiences and career choices. All young women will have different ideas about this, and this is positive. It is very important to have a discussion in which everyone's ideas can be heard.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

Some questions that a mentor might ask include:

- What is equality? Where do we see equality? Where do we see inequality?
- How can we respond to inequality when we see or experience it?
- What experiences do girls have that are different than boys'?
- What experiences do girls have that are the same as boys'?
- Does being a girl impact school experiences? If so, how?
- Does being a girl impact work opportunities? If so, how?
- Do families and communities view and/or treat boys and girls differently?



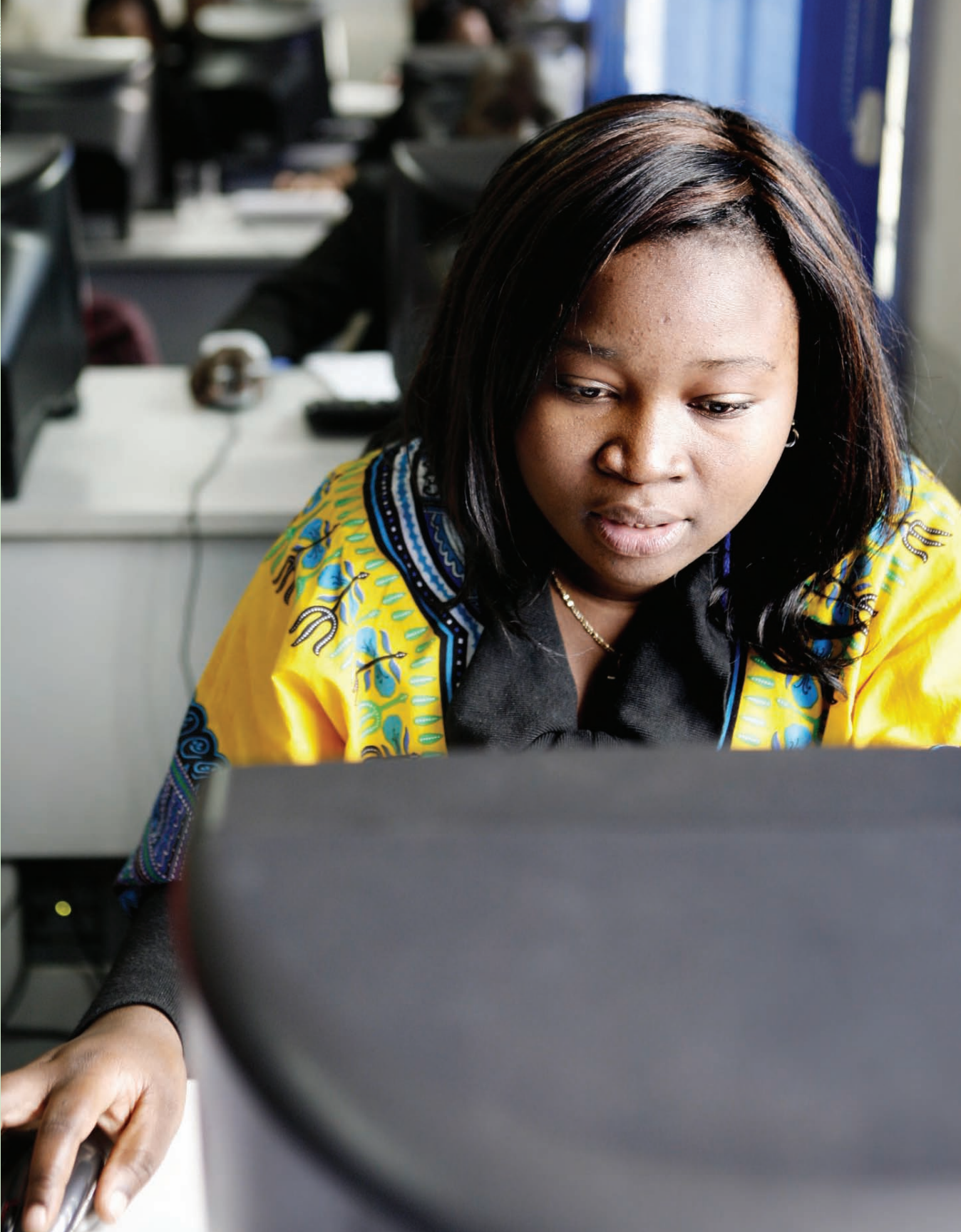
Activity for Mentoring Session "FINDING SOLUTIONS"

Mentors may want to hold a session to identify the barriers to successful transitions from school to work. The discussion in this session should be led by the young women—with their perspectives creating the content of the session. The mentor should encourage the young women to come up with creative ways to deal with the challenges that young women face finishing their education and starting a career.



Activity for mentoring session: "BECOMING A LEADER IN YOUR COMMUNITY"

Young women with secondary educations have a lot of knowledge and skills to share with their families and communities. In this activity, mentors can lead sessions to find solutions about ways that secondary school graduates can improve the situation of their families and communities using the confidence, knowledge and skills they received in school.





III.

DEVELOPING EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS

Section III of this Guide is focused on developing the skills that young women need to be successful in their job performance. It includes guidance about work ethics, positive attitudes toward work and effective communications in the workplace.

Young women need many skills to find jobs and be successful in their jobs. These skills will be useful for the rest of their lives, at home and in the community. Things like a positive attitude, the ability to take initiative, the ability to work in teams, and good communication skills are called “employability skills” because they increase a person’s chances of getting a job (employability) and a person’s chances of keeping a job.

1. Having a Positive Attitude

Having a job and doing it well can be challenging. Effective workers learn how to maintain a positive attitude in order to deal with the challenges that work sometimes presents. When people are patient and flexible, they are better able to deal with problems that may arise. Employers and co-workers appreciate when people have a positive attitude and are pleasant to be around. A young woman can maintain a positive attitude even if she has a task that she does not enjoy doing very much. She recognizes that it is her responsibility and does the task well without complaining.

Taking initiative

Many people can do what they are told, but not everyone is able to figure out by themselves what needs to be done and do it without being asked. This is a very valuable skill to have. Taking initiative shows that a young woman is smart, ambitious, and helpful. Taking initiative means that a young woman can see what still needs to be done and have the independence and the skills to do it herself. People notice those who take initiative and remember that they are good, hard workers. Taking initiative is a sign of leadership because leaders do not wait for other people to tell them what to do; rather, they come up with their own ideas.

Having a strong work ethic

People who are hard workers are said to have a “strong work ethic.” This means that they are committed to doing their job and doing it well. People who work hard are rewarded. People who do their jobs well are rewarded. If a young woman has a strong work ethic, it means that she is committed to her job. If she is committed to her job, it means that she is committed to her goals. If she is committed to her goals and willing to work hard, she can accomplish anything that she puts her mind to. Employers value a strong work ethic and a worker who takes initiative.

Maintaining motivation to do the job

When a person is motivated by her job, she enjoys doing it. When a person is not motivated by her job, the work seems hard and it is not fun. It is important to maintain a positive attitude about work because people usually try their best, work



their hardest, and succeed the most when they are happy in their work and care about what they are doing. Mentors should encourage young women to keep a list of things that motivate them about their job. If ever the young women feel discouraged or unmotivated about the work, they can look at the list and be reminded that there are many different things that can keep a person motivated in her job.

For example, maybe Fatou does not have a good relationship with her boss because he finds fault with everything that she does, and will not give her more money even when she deserves it. But maybe Fatou does have a good relationship with her co-workers and she enjoys work because of them. Fatou can still see a positive aspect of her job, and she can stay motivated to work hard because she respects and enjoys her co-workers. Fatou's good work will reflect her good attitude, and it will pay off eventually, even if Fatou decides to bring the skills that she has learned through this job to work somewhere else.



QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. What are some ways people can stay motivated in their jobs?
2. What should people do if a long time has gone by and they are not motivated at all to stay in their job?
3. If a young woman does not like her job, should she still work hard and try to have a good attitude? Why or why not?
4. What are some examples of times that young women in the mentor group have taken initiative to do something?
5. What are some other skills that young women in the group can think of that will make them more "employable" in their communities?

**Activity for mentoring session:****"HOW CAN YOUNG WOMEN STAY MOTIVATED?"**

The mentor can present the following scenarios to the young women and ask them to think of ways to stay motivated in their jobs despite challenges.

- Aisha wants to be a nurse but she had to take a job cleaning bathrooms in the airport. She is not at all interested in her job, but she is able to bring home enough money to support her family and to save some money to afford nursing school. How can Aisha stay motivated?
- Mary finds her job as a teacher very interesting, but the pay is very low. How can Mary stay motivated to keep her job? What other things could she do to solve the problem?
- Kadiatou wants to be a computer engineer and she works in a store that sells computers. She does not like working in a store; she would prefer to work on programming computers instead. How can she stay motivated in her job?



**Longer activity: "AN INSPIRATIONAL LETTER FOR THE FUTURE"**

Ask the young women to write themselves an inspirational letter that will inspire them in the future if they are ever discouraged by their jobs. They should put the letters in an envelope and seal the envelope and hide it in a safe place. If they feel discouraged in the future, they can open the letter and be encouraged by their own words.

**Longer activity: "HOW SUCCESSFUL PEOPLE OVERCOME CHALLENGES"**

Every man and woman, even very successful men and women, have faced challenges in their work. Almost everyone has worked in a job that he or she did not enjoy very much; this is even true for some of the most well-known and successful people in the world! Mentors should ask the young women to research successful figures and report on the challenges and hardships that they faced throughout their careers. How did they overcome these challenges? How did they stay motivated to follow their dreams and go far in their careers? Some examples of people to research include Barack Obama, Bill Gates, Nelson Mandela, Ellen Johnson Sirleaf, female ministers or political leaders in the young women's country. The group members can also identify family and community members who have overcome odds to be successful and research how they stayed motivated and focused on their goals.

2. Strengthening Communication Skills

Communication is how people exchange ideas, messages, and information. Young women who are good communicators are able to make themselves understood by other people and they are able to listen carefully to understand other people. There are two parts to communication: sending messages and receiving messages. There are many different ways for people to communicate with each other. They can communicate “verbally”—using spoken words—or “non-verbally”—using body language. They can also use writing or “graphics”—like pictures and charts—to communicate a message.

Using body language

People communicate with each other using language. Language can be spoken words, but people also use their bodies to communicate messages to each other. For example, if someone turns her back while someone else is speaking to her, the speaker will probably think the person is rude or does not care what she is saying.



The same body language can send different messages in different cultures. Mentors can help young women think about what different body signals and movements mean in their local culture. In Western cultures, smiling, shaking hands, and looking into someone’s eyes—called “eye contact”—shows that a person is friendly and confident. In many other cultures, smiling, shaking hands, and making eye contact with someone may not be appropriate. Before interviewing, young women can identify the body language used by confident, intelligent young women in their communities and learn to use more of that body language in a work setting.

Young women can use body language to send strong messages to people before they use their words. If someone is bothering or harassing a young woman at work, she can cross her arms and turn away to show that she is closing herself off and does not like to be treated that way. If the person who is harassing still does not stop, the young woman will have to use verbal communication—her words—to send a strong message for the person to stop.

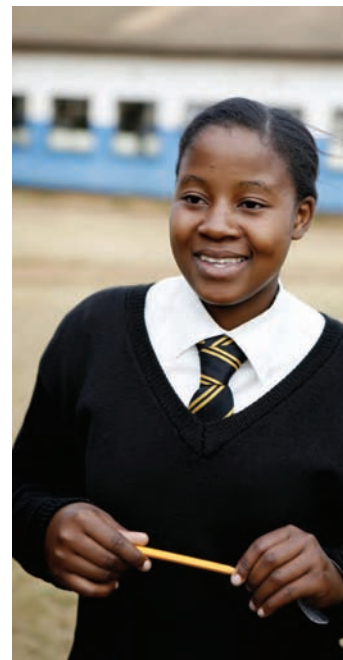
Speaking clearly (improving verbal skills)

In spoken communication, it is very important for young women to speak clearly and loudly so that other people can hear exactly what they are saying. In order to send a message effectively, young women must think about what they want to say and how to say it. They should carefully choose the words that express what they mean. Young women need to keep in mind to whom they are sending their message. For example, if a young woman is talking to a child, she will use simple language. If a young woman is speaking with a government official or an elder in the community, she will speak very respectfully.

Speaking in public

It is natural for people to feel shy when they are speaking in front of a large audience. Young women can use different techniques to feel comfortable when they speak in front of many people. Some may imagine everyone in the audience wearing a silly hat. Others may imagine that they are only speaking to one person. Others may use humor, like jokes, to make the audience laugh and that can help everyone relax.

When speaking in front of a group of people, it is important for young women to speak loudly and clearly. They should practice what they want to say and think hard about how they want to say it. Sometimes it is helpful to create notes, with just a few words for each idea, as a guide for talking.



Writing clearly (improving writing skills)

Writing well is a very valuable skill for people to have. To improve writing skills, young women should read a lot. Being familiar with writing styles from experts who write books or articles in newspapers and magazines can help people become better writers. Mentors can help young women identify writers that young women can learn from.

When writing, young women should say what they want to say as clearly and with as few words as possible. Like in all forms of communication, young women should always consider their audience. Who will be reading what they are writing, or who will be listening to what they are saying?

Every piece of writing needs to have a main point or a message. This is called a thesis, and it is the most important part of any piece of writing because it explains the author's opinion to her readers. Just like in a spoken—or “oral”—presentation, a good piece of writing has an introduction that sets up the reader for what the writer will discuss, a thesis (the main point), evidence (things that prove that the thesis is true), and a conclusion that reminds the reader of the important ideas that the writer presented throughout the piece of writing.

Communicating in the Internet age

The Internet has changed the way many people communicate. In some cases, people send emails instead of speaking on the phone. Or they talk—or “chat”—online. Often, communication over the Internet is less formal, but that does not mean that young women should allow their other communication skills (speaking, making presentations, showing good body language, and writing) to become weak or informal.



Text messages, or SMS, are also a quick and easy way for people to communicate. But because SMS are short, they do not contain full ideas. Sometimes, people spell words incorrectly because they are in a hurry, or they shorten words or expressions. In SMS and when using the Internet, these kinds of things are not serious, especially if someone is communicating with one of her friends. But that does not mean that bad spelling and grammar are okay for young women to use at the workplace or with co-workers and supervisors.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. What is verbal communication? What is non-verbal communication? What are some examples of each? How would a young woman use these in an interview to show she is confident?
2. What is body language and why is it just as important as verbal communication? How can the young women in the group use their bodies to express their thoughts or feelings? When are times that body language is not enough and young women have to use other types of communication to send a message to someone else?
3. What does it mean to write clearly? What does it mean to speak clearly? What does it mean to communicate clearly?
4. How have the Internet and mobile phones changed the way people communicate? What are some good changes? What are some bad changes?



Activity for mentoring session: "TELEPHONE"

Ask the young women to sit in a circle. Pick one young woman to think of a message that she wants everyone in the room to know. Ask her to whisper the message to the person seated on her left so that no one else can hear what she said. Then ask that young woman to whisper what she heard to the young woman seated on her left. No one may ask for the message to be repeated—if she does not hear the message, she must still repeat the part that she did hear. The message will travel from person to person, until it reaches the last young woman. The last young

woman should repeat out loud the message that was whispered into her ear. Usually, the message that has been passed around the room is not the same as the first message. Sometimes, it is an entirely different message! But this game shows the importance of communicating clearly and listening carefully.



Activity for mentoring session: "INTERPRETING BODY LANGUAGE"

People's bodies communicate what they are thinking and feeling the same way their words communicate what they are thinking and feeling. Each young woman will have a turn to use body language to communicate a mood or feeling. She must not say a word or make a sound, and everyone in the room will watch her and guess how she is feeling or what she is thinking based on her body language. For example, if a young woman crosses her arms and looks at the floor, the other young women in the room might guess that she is feeling shy. If a young woman jumps in the air with a big smile on her face, the audience might guess that she is feeling excited.



Longer activity: "USE DIFFERENT WAYS TO COMMUNICATE IDEAS"

Mentors can ask each young woman to pick a research topic and choose how she wants to present the topic to the rest of the group. Some young women might want to communicate their topic in a speech. Others might want to use drawings. Others may prefer to write a report. For example, one young woman might research the dangers of smoking and think that the best way to communicate the bad things she has discovered about the terrible effects of smoking on health is to give a speech.



3. Developing Other Employability Skills

The skills discussed earlier in this manual are skills that young women can and should apply to any part of their lives. But there are also some skills that are particularly important for the workplace. Effective team work, team learning, and understanding of finances are all very important for young women to learn and apply to their work.

Working in teams

Teamwork is an important skill to have for any job, and many people have experience working in teams from living with their families. A family is a team that works together to survive. When people work together in a team, they can accomplish more than if they were just working by themselves. Each person plays a different role, and each person needs to make sacrifices for the good of the group. Each person needs to contribute something, or the goals of the group will not be met. For example, if one person in a factory does not do her job, everyone's work will be affected and the factory will not be able to produce and sell its products.

Good teamwork happens when team members learn to communicate well with each other and trust each other. Teams succeed when everyone makes a contribution to the team. Each person should contribute what she does best to make the team stronger. If a person has a weakness, it is not a big problem in a team because maybe her weakness will be someone else's strength. However, every young woman should learn what her weaknesses are and try to improve on her weaknesses.

Learning in teams

When people work together in teams, they can learn from each other. They can confront a problem together and figure out as a group how to solve it. Each person can contribute her ideas because each person may have a different method of solving problems. Listening to a variety of ideas about how to approach a problem can show people new ways to think. Just as the young women in the mentoring

group learn and grow together because they are a team with common goals, a team in the workplace should learn and grow together.

Basic accounting principles

In many places in the world, men tend to control money and sometimes women do not know much about managing or handling money because they have never learned. But all young women should learn how to manage their own money, and they should understand how money is managed at their workplace and in their homes.



A “budget” is a plan of how money will be spent. In a budget, people can see exactly how much money they will need to spend on each particular item. A business might keep track of its expenses every month by putting together a monthly budget. The budget might say how much money it will have to pay its employees, how much the bills cost (rent, electricity, and water, for example), and how much it will have to pay in taxes. Budgets also show how much money a person or company plans to make and compares that amount with the total expected expenses.

“Accounting” is the regular, periodic recording of the financial transactions (e.g., revenue, expenses) of a business. In short, accounting keeps track of all movements of money within an office or company. Once transactions are recorded as part of the accounting process, they can be compared to the estimates in the budget, sometimes requiring updates to the budget.



Professional Development Training

Sometimes it is helpful for young women to get additional training when they complete secondary school to increase their skills and the likelihood of getting a job. This training might be through private or public training centers and can include internships or apprenticeships. It is important that young women understand the quality of the school or organization they are interested in and whether or not their programs are accredited by the government. It is also important for young women to investigate the type of certificate or degree they will receive and whether or not the school offers job placement services or paid internship opportunities.

Internships/Apprenticeships

Internships and apprenticeships are another important way to build skills, meet people working in areas that young women might be interested in and create experience that can be included on a CV. Sometimes companies and other organizations have internship programs, but other times, young women might need to contact these organizations and suggest an internship –



providing examples of the work they could do, the time they would be willing to commit and how their work will help the organization.

In rural areas where there may be fewer companies and organizations, young women can identify smaller businesses or entrepreneurs who might be open to having an apprentice. An apprenticeship is usually unpaid, but the apprentice can learn valuable skills such as how to create products for which there is a demand, how to develop a business plan and budget and how to market products or services.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. What experience do the young women in the mentor's group have working in teams?
2. How can members of a team work well together? Why is it important for every member of a team to contribute something to the team?
3. All businesses, companies, offices, farms, factories, and governments in the world require money to function, so they all need to keep track of money—how much is made, how much is needed, where it goes, etc. Why is it important for young women to understand the basics of accounting, or keeping track of money? Create a brainstorming session about what budgets for an office, farm or factory might include?



Activity for mentoring session:

"WORKING IN TEAMS TO CREATE BUDGETS"

Split the young women into a few different teams and ask each team to think of an event that they would like to plan and to make up a budget for the event. Maybe one group will want to plan a wedding, so they will need to think of all of the things that they will need to do and buy and how much each item will cost. Is the budget accurate? Could the event really be done with the amount of money that is listed in the budget? Young women can also brainstorm about what might be included in a budget for operating a store, farm or other business.



Longer term activity for mentoring session:

"EXPLORING TRAINING RESOURCES"

Create different teams of young women and have them explore what training is available in their area. The teams can be divided by type of training or geographically. Each team should complete a list of the places that offer training, the qualifications required to enter the training program, the costs associated with the program and any financial assistance that might be offered. It is important that each team also understand exactly what certification the training offers and how this would help to get a job or start a career.



Learning from the experts:

“HOW BUSINESS PEOPLE HANDLE THEIR MONEY”

Mentors should invite a local businesswoman or businessman to show the young women how they keep track of the money in their company. Showing young women real budgets and records of financial transactions will help them learn the skills to be able to master financial concepts themselves. This will be very helpful to them in the workforce.







IV.

LOOKING FOR WORK

Jobs can be very difficult to find. Job-seekers need to be creative and use all their ideas and contacts to identify job opportunities. Unemployment is one of the biggest problems facing youth in most of the world. Young people aged 15–24 represent over 40% of the world’s jobless³. Even when it seems like there are no jobs available, there are always things that a community needs and ways that a young woman can find work.

Here are some things for young women to remember when they are looking for work:

- They should know what kind of work they want.
- They should know how to present themselves as determined and committed workers because people want to hire hard workers.
- They should be flexible and maintain a positive attitude.
- They should be creative and try to think of new ways to make contacts and find job opportunities.
- They should try to meet people who they can trust to help them or give them career advice.

³ International Labor Organization, Global Employment Trends for Youth Report, October 2008. <http://www.ilo.org>



The most common way for people to find jobs is through other people. There are also places in the community where people can find announcements for jobs. It depends on the community, but sometimes people post announcements of jobs in places like libraries, newspapers, magazines, government buildings, and schools. Mentors should also encourage young women to take initiative! If they know of a place they want to work, they can visit that place with a friend or a family member or the mentor and ask about job opportunities there.



1. Preparing a Résumé or a Curriculum Vitae (CV)

Everyone has seen advertisements that try to convince people to buy a particular product. The advertisement explains in an exciting and active way why people should be interested in the product.

A CV is similar to an advertisement, except instead of advertising a thing, it advertises a person. A CV explains in a clear, active way why a person is qualified for a particular job. A CV presents a person's work and/or volunteer experience, education, skills, and goals.

Here are some things that every CV needs:

- It needs to be organized into different sections, such as "Personal Information," "Education," "Experience," and "Skills." It should also be organized so that the things that a young woman did most recently are at the top and the things that she did a long time ago are at bottom.
- It needs to be neat and look professional.
- It needs to give information about the place where a young woman did something and the dates that she did it.

A young woman may want to include the names and contact information (phone number and/or email address) of a few "references"—people who can talk about a young woman's strengths and skills. These references could be previous employers, teachers or other adults who can speak about her experiences and strengths. Ideally, references should be people with whom the young woman has worked.



Reminder!

Mentors should remind young women to continuously update their CVs every time they have a new job or learn a new skill.

Employers often receive many CVs and usually do not spend very much time reading each one. In fact, an employer may just spend 20 or 30 seconds reading a CV before he or she makes a decision whether to not or interview the person. Because of this, mistakes in spelling, grammar, and punctuation stand out. Young women should make sure their CV is free of errors before sending it to someone. CVs should also highlight the experience and skills required for each job application, so young women will probably need more than one version of their CV. Mentors can volunteer to edit CVs, or encourage young women to show their CVs to teachers or other professionals in the community.

Mentors should encourage young women not to share too much personal information on their CVs. CVs should provide a lot of information about a young woman's education and experience and only basic personal information that is necessary for the employer to contact the young woman for an interview. Sensitive information, including passport numbers or ID numbers, should not be provided unless the employer specifically asks for it. Physical information, including height and weight, are not necessary either.

Here is an outline for a CV:

CURRICULUM VITAE

NAME (First name and Family name)

Street Address

Email Address

City, Country

Phone Number

CAREER OBJECTIVE:

This paragraph describes the applicant's short-term and long-term goals. It explains the person's interests.

CAREER PROFILE:

This paragraph tells the story of the applicant's education and career experience. It highlights some of the skills the applicant has gained from her experience.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE:

Year	Institution	Subject	Degree
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(in reverse chronological order, which means from the most recent in time to the most distant in time)

WORK EXPERIENCE:

(in reverse chronological order, which means from the most recent in time to the most distant in time)

Company; Year; Place

Job Title

Description of Duties and Responsibilities:

VOLUNTEER/EXTRA-CURRICULAR EXPERIENCE:

(For example: School Committees, Community Organizations, Clubs)

SKILLS:

(For example: computer skills, agriculture knowledge)

2. Preparing a Cover Letter

Creating a Cover Letter to accompany a CV is also important when applying for jobs. A Cover Letter should be written for each job opportunity so that it explains what job is being applied for and why the young woman's experience and interests fit that particular job. Cover Letters are most effective when they are clear and concise and display some knowledge about the company that is hiring.



Writing a Cover Letter: The Do's and Don'ts

DO:

- ✓ Ask someone to review the Cover Letter before sending.
- ✓ Address the letter to a specific person.
- ✓ Send an original copy with each job application.
- ✓ Keep it short and use clear language.
- ✓ Tell them why you can do the job!

DON'T:

- ✗ Send the CV without a Cover Letter
- ✗ Send a Cover Letter with misspelled words!
- ✗ Forget to tell them clearly what you have to offer the company.



Here is an example of a Cover Letter.

Your Contact Information

Address

City, etc.

Phone Number

Cell Phone Number

Email

Employer Contact Information

Name

Title

Company

Address

City, etc.

Date

Dear Mr./Ms. Last Name,

I would like to express my interest in the Customer Service Representative position with COMPANY NAME. The position of Customer Service Representative interests me because of my organizational and communication skills. As an enthusiastic, outgoing person, I enjoy working to find solutions and believe that good service is important to the success of any organization.

As a member of my school's Student Council, I have gained some very important skills including how to set goals, work in teams, and represent the interests of my fellow students to the school administration. During my school career, I have been a consistently high-performing student, receiving a final grade point average of [NUMBER] and a [NAME] exam score of [NUMBER]. I have excellent references which I would be happy to provide at your request.

I am confident that I could be an asset to your organization and I look forward to discussing the Customer Service Representative position in more detail. I will call you within the next week to discuss arranging an interview.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Signature

First Name/ Last Name

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. What is a CV? What is the information that every CV should contain?
2. Why is it important for young women to explain the duties that they were responsible for and the skills they learned in each of their past work experiences?
3. It is important that every CV be clear and neat and organized. Imagine that every employer sees 20 CVs. What are some ways that young women can make their CV stand out but still be clear, neat, and organized?
4. Why is it important for young women to include a Cover Letter with their CV?
5. What are the things that should be included in a Cover Letter?



Activity for mentoring session: "PRODUCING A SAMPLE CV"

Mentors can lead young women in writing their own CVs based on the sample in this *Guide*.



Activity for mentoring session: "PRODUCING A SAMPLE COVER LETTER"

Mentors can lead young women in writing their own Cover Letters based on the sample in this *Guide*.



Longer activity: "PEER-REVIEW OF CVS"

Ask each young woman to prepare a draft of her CV using the same format that the group learned during the mentoring session. Once everyone has completed a draft, the mentor can pass out the CVs and the young women can review each other's CVs and make comments and suggestions. It is important that all comments give positive advice about how to improve the CVs, rather than criticisms of what is in the CVs.



Longer activity:

“PEER-REVIEW OF COVER LETTERS”

Ask each young woman to prepare a draft of her Cover Letter using a job posting that she found. Once everyone has completed a draft, the mentor can pass out the Cover Letters and job postings and the young women can review each other’s Cover Letters and make comments and suggestions. It is important that all comments give positive advice about how to improve the Cover Letters, rather than criticisms of what is in the Cover Letter.

3. Identifying Resources to Find a Job

Even if it seems like there is a shortage of jobs, there is always a demand for people who are hard workers and determined to do a good job. Mentors should help young women identify the biggest needs of the community. If a community needs something, it is likely that there will be jobs available to do something that fulfills that need. For example, if more people in a community begin to buy and use mobile phones, they will need someone to sell them phone cards. A combination of good contacts, initiative and creativity will help young women find opportunities for work, sometimes in places they never imagined.

Identifying job openings

In each community, there are different ways that employers advertise their job openings and try to find employees. Mentors should lead a discussion about how to find information in each community about job opportunities.

Expanding networks of contacts

Many people receive help to find jobs, so generally people are willing to help others find work too. Mentors should encourage young women to seek out the people who might be able to help them find work. For example, if Fatima is interested in the medical field, she might try to find a female doctor or nurse at the local clinic or hospital to speak with. This person can answer Fatima's questions and help her find more people who can tell her what she needs to study and what other steps she needs to take to enter the field of medicine.

Mentors should remind young women to be open to the opportunity of meeting people who might be able to help them. However, young women should always keep in mind that some of the people who promise to help them or give them jobs might not be good people. They might want something from the young women, and they might not actually be able to help them at all! So young women should meet with people who they know and trust, or they should bring along someone they know and trust if they are meeting with a stranger.



If a young woman is offered a job that would require her to move outside of her community to a big city or even to another country, a young woman should be very careful about accepting this job. She should ask many questions about this job. Even if the person who is offering the job is someone the young woman knows, or her family knows, she still has to be careful. The young woman can ask if there is a contract she can sign before she takes the job, and she should be able to understand the contract and agree with every single thing the contract says. A trusted adult should also review the terms of the job and help to ensure it is a safe opportunity. Mentors can also help ensure opportunities are safe and well-suited for the young women she advises.

Identifying the needs of the community

There are some things that every community needs. Communities need to have places where people can live, places where people can get food and water, places for people to celebrate together, places for people who are sick, and places for people to study and learn. These needs are always changing, so new opportunities are always being created. Access to technology and new economic activities also create new opportunities that young women can identify and pursue for employment or entrepreneurial opportunities.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. How can identifying a community's needs reveal job opportunities for young women?
2. Why do young women have to remember to be very careful when they meet people who say that they can help them or give them jobs? What can young women do to protect themselves against people who might have bad intentions toward them?
3. What are some of the ways that the community has changed, in the opinion of the young women in the group? Are there new jobs associated with these changes?



Activity for mentoring sessions: “LOOKING FOR JOB OPENINGS”

Mentors can lead a discussion about the many ways that employers advertise for job openings. This can include newspapers, postings in offices, communal areas and on-line advertisements (e.g., job boards, company websites). Mentors can lead an exercise where the young women individually or as groups spend a week or two finding job advertisements and leading discussions about the job openings, including their understanding of the job and qualifications and how they found the advertisements.



Activity for mentoring session: “IDENTIFYING THE NEEDS OF THE COMMUNITY”

Mentors can lead the young women in a discussion about the types of jobs that are available in the community now and about the types of jobs that will be needed as the community changes. Mentors should help young women identify the needs of the community. Do people have enough food and water? Are there enough teachers? Are there enough people who understand financial and banking issues? Are there enough people who know how to farm even if environmental conditions have changed over time? Is there a demand for a certain product or service?



Activity for mentoring session: “SEEKING SAFE WAYS TO MEET PEOPLE”

Mentors can lead an exercise that will help young women distinguish between people who can help them find jobs and people who they should not trust. Networking is important and useful to any young woman seeking a job, but it can also be dangerous. Use two types of scenarios: one in which the person is an appropriate contact and is able to help the young woman and give her advice; and one in which the person cannot or will not help the young woman and actually wants something else from her.

Here are some examples:

- A man approaches a young woman in his car. When she says she is interested in finding a job, he says he knows of high-paying jobs in another country. What should the young woman do? Is this a safe situation?
- The father of a young woman’s friend is a doctor in the local hospital. She has known him since she was a child, and he is a good friend of her father. He invites



her to the hospital to meet some doctors and nurses there. What should the young woman do? Is this a safe situation?

- A young woman meets a man while waiting for a taxi to go into town. The man offers her a job at a factory and promises he will pay her a good salary. He seems nice, but she has never seen him before and no one in her family knows him. What should the young woman do? Is this a safe situation?
- A young woman sees a man reading a math book. Math was her favorite subject in high school. They begin talking, and he says he is a university professor. She recognizes his name because her neighbor studied with him. He gives her his business card and invites her to email him if she has any questions. What should the young woman do? Is this a safe situation?



Longer activity:

“CREATING A JOB BOARD FOR THE MENTORING GROUP”

People often hear about jobs from other people. Mentors and the young women in their group should always keep their eyes and ears open to job opportunities in the community. If one young woman in the group is not interested in a job or not qualified for it, another group member may be. Every week, the mentor and the young women can share all of the job opportunities they have heard about in the community. Make sure to bring the phone number or address of the employer so that interested young women in the group can follow up on the opportunity!



4. Applying for a job

Once job openings or opportunities have been identified, it is important to plan how to respond and submit an application. Timing is everything and it is very important to respond quickly to any job postings. But it is also important to respond with thoughtfulness and that includes creating a Cover Letter that is written for each job posting and a CV that highlights the experience related to the open position.

Understanding a job posting:

- What are the required qualifications?
- What amount of experience is required?
- What skills are needed to perform this job?
- Does the posting specify education requirements?



SAMPLE JOB ADVERTISEMENT

Rainbow Foods Company is looking for a full-time **Customer Service Representative** to join their team.

Job responsibilities include office administration, organization, handling customer needs and assisting with data entry.

- Job qualifications include:
- good organization skills
 - excellent oral and written communication skills
 - proficiency with computers and office applications
 - energy and “can do” attitude
 - secondary school certificate required, professional computer training preferred

Interested candidates should send a Cover Letter and CV to the attention of:

Personnel Department
Rainbow Foods
123 Central Avenue
Zomba, Malawi

Applications will be accepted until June 1st.

Find out more about the company and think about who you might know that works there.

Look at the Title and consider what this says about the job.

This section is very important to consider if you would enjoy the job and it is well-suited to your strengths.

This is the most important section! This will tell you if you have the qualifications for the job. Don't worry if you don't have all of them, but you should have at least half of them and any that are marked “required”. Your CV should highlight any of these skill that you have.

Even if the advertisement does not have a name, you should call and find out to whom you should address your Cover Letter.

Be very aware of any dates mentioned in the advertisement! Make sure that your application is submitted well before the deadline.

5. Interviewing for a job

A job interview is a meeting between an employer (the person who hires workers to fill a job) and someone who is applying to work for the employer. The employer asks the applicant (the person who is applying for the job) many different questions. Usually, the employer asks questions directly related to the applicant's experience. The employer wants to hear what the applicant did, how she did it, and what she learned from it. The employer also tends to ask about the applicant's strengths and weaknesses. When an employer asks questions during a job interview, he or she wants the applicant to answer the questions with specific examples.

But the employer is not the only one who gets to ask the questions during a job interview! The applicant also has the opportunity to ask questions about the job and the company. Before coming to the job interview, young women should do research to find out some facts about the company. They might want to know how big it is, when it was started, and what exactly it does. Knowing some information about the company will help young women ask better questions during the interview. It will also impress the employer because the employer can tell that the young woman is really interested in the job and the business or company.



Examples of questions young women might ask during a job interview:

- What would a typical day be like for me if I worked in this company?
- What are some of the skills that I will need for this job?
- Are there opportunities to be promoted within the company?
- How did you (the interviewer) come to work at this company?

First impressions are very important. A first impression is the first idea that someone has about someone else after meeting her for the first time. People often remember the first time that they met someone else and what they thought of them. They might remember if they were wearing something inappropriate or sloppy, if they mumbled their name, if they seemed shy or nervous, or if they



arrived late. They will also remember if the person was dressed neatly, if they smiled and said their name clearly, if they arrived on time, and if they were prepared.

Important things to remember for a job interview:

- Gather information about the organization before the interview.
- Dress appropriately.
- Be on time.
- Bring a copy of the CV.
- Be respectful of the interviewer.
- Even if a young woman is nervous, she should still try to be enthusiastic about the job and appear confident. Speak clearly and establish eye contact.
- Listen carefully to each question and answer exactly and completely what was asked.
- Provide examples to illustrate experience and emphasize strengths.
- Prepare questions in advance that reflect knowledge about the organization or job type and ask for an opportunity to discuss questions.

It is normal to be nervous for job interviews, especially for the first job interview that a young woman has! But as young women have more interviews, they will be more comfortable and able to anticipate the kinds of questions they will be asked.

Following up after the interview

It is important for young women to show that they are really interested in the job for which they are applying. Showing enthusiasm, or excitement, for a job makes an applicant stand out among other applicants. Employers want employees to be excited about their work because they know that people who are motivated and have a good attitude will do a better job.



Experiences such as job interviews can help young women develop confidence and inner strength. As they become accustomed to job interviews, they will be more comfortable expressing themselves, answering hard questions, and providing real-life examples.

Mentors should remind young women to “follow-up” with the employer after the interview. “Following up” means that the young women contact the employer again to repeat their interest in the job and to see if any decision has been reached on whether or not to hire them. Young women can send an email, write a letter, call, or even visit the employer a second time to remind him or her of their enthusiasm for the job. Follow-up communication usually occurs within one week after the first job interview.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. What is a first impression, and why is it important? What are some of the things that people use to form their first impressions? Was there a time when the young women had a positive first impression of someone? Was there a time when the young women had a negative first impression of someone? What made one impression good and the other bad?
2. What are some of the things a young woman can do to give a good first impression during her job interview?
3. What are some questions that might be asked at a job interview? How can young women prepare for a job interview?



Activity for mentoring session:

“PRACTICING INTERVIEWS WITHIN THE MENTOR GROUP”

The young women should split into pairs and take turns interviewing each other for their dream jobs. It is okay if they do not know exactly what questions are asked in real job interviews because they can still ask the most important questions that will ever be asked in an interview, such as the following questions:

- What makes you interested in this job?
- What are your qualifications for this job?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- What are your interests?
- What are your career goals?



Longer activity:

**“FINDING EXAMPLES WHEN YOUNG WOMEN
DISPLAYED EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS”**

A very important part of job interviews is being able to give specific examples of when a young woman had experience doing activities like those she would have to do on the job. Mentors should give the young women a list of questions that will encourage them to think of stories and examples from their lives.

Common interview questions include:

- When were you in a position of leadership?
- Was there a time when you faced a challenge? If so, what did you do?
- Was there a time when you had a problem? How did you solve it?
- Tell me about a time that you worked on a team? What role did you play?
How did you help your team accomplish its goals?
- What have you done in your life that you are most proud of?







V.

STARTING A NEW JOB

Section V explores the ways in which young women can be most successful when they start their new job. Understanding and managing the expectations of your co-workers and supervisors is very important; communicating in the work place is different than communicating with friends and family. These topics and several others are explored below.

It takes a lot of time and energy to find a new job! Now it is time for the young women to put their skills to use, with the advice and guidance of the mentors. Just as the “first impression” that a young woman makes is important for a job interview, the “first impression” that she leaves on her co-workers and supervisors is very important for the first days and weeks of her new job. Things like establishing good relationships with her co-workers, dressing neatly and appropriately for the job, knowing her rights and responsibilities, and making sure her workplace is a safe and comfortable place for her to be are all top priorities for a young woman beginning a new job.

1. Communicating Well with Coworkers and Supervisors

Forming good relationships with coworkers and supervisors is the first and most important step of settling into a new job. The easiest way to form good relationships with people is to establish good methods of communication with them from the very beginning.

She can send verbal (spoken in words) messages to people about things like:

- Her name.
- Information about where she is from, what her experiences are and where she went to school.
- Some of her goals for the job.
- Questions about things she does not understand about the job or the organization.

She can also send non-verbal messages, communicated through body language and in other unspoken ways, to people by doing things like:

- Dressing neatly and appropriately.
- Being on time.

People need to work as a team to accomplish goals at work. Each person has a different role and different responsibilities. It is important for young women to understand the roles and responsibilities of their coworkers and supervisors. It is equally important for young women to understand in detail their own role and responsibilities.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. Is it important for young women to form good relationships with their coworkers and supervisors? Why or why not?

2. How can young women form good relationships with the other people at their office from the very first day?
3. What kind of messages (verbal and nonverbal) should young women send in the first days of their new jobs?
4. Do young women need to understand the roles and responsibilities of the other people who work in their office? Why or why not? Do other people need to understand a young woman’s responsibilities also? Why or why not?



Activity for mentoring session:

“SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE FIRST DAY OF WORK AND THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL”

Mentors can help young women to think of their first day at work like their first day of school. The mentors can lead a discussion about the things that are important on the first day of school. The young women in the group can trade stories—did they ever make mistakes or have embarrassing moments on the first day of school? Why? Did anyone have a great first day of school? Why was it great? Was she prepared for the first day, wear a nice and clean uniform, bring all of the materials that she needed, and remember the name of her teacher? Did she participate on her first day and answer a question? Did she make an effort to meet her classmates?



Seeing similarities between the first day of school, which most of the young women will have experienced, and the first day of work, which the young women might fear or not know what to expect, will help young women learn how to adapt to new situations for the rest of their lives.

2. Dressing for the Job

Dressing nicely, neatly, and appropriately for the workplace sends a message to coworkers and supervisors that a young woman is respectful of the people she works with and of the work environment. The way people dress and their appearance sends a message to the people around them.

Wearing inappropriate clothes will send a bad message to co-workers because a young woman is communicating through her clothes that she is not prepared to do the work of the office, or that she does not respect the rules of the office.

Unfortunately, men can get incorrect ideas about young women who wear clothes that are short, tight, or reveal their skin. A young woman who does messy work with her hands might send her co-workers a message that she is not able or willing to work if she arrives at work wearing a beautiful dress, sandals, and jewelry. Young women simply need to understand the dress code for their work situation and their use their own best judgment.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. Do a person's clothes and appearance communicate things about them? How?
2. How does a young woman know what to wear to work? How can she find out what are the appropriate clothes for her particular job?
3. What can happen if a young woman does not dress appropriately for her workplace?



Activity for mentoring session:

"FINDING APPROPRIATE CLOTHES FOR DIFFERENT JOBS"

Come up with ideas of things to wear for the following list of jobs:

- Small business owner meeting with a customer.
- Important speech in front of a large group of people.
- Full day working at a factory.



Longer activity: "FASHION SHOW"

The mentor can assign each young woman in the group to a different job, requesting that she bring, draw, or describe one outfit that is not appropriate to wear to work, and one outfit that is very appropriate to wear to work for that particular job. She should be able to explain why one set of clothes is inappropriate and one set of clothes is appropriate. Some examples of occupations include: farmer, teacher, journalist, saleswoman, waitress, businesswoman, etc.




3. Managing Expectations Between Employees and Employers

Employees and employers both expect certain things from each other. Employees can expect employers to treat them with respect, to pay them on time, to ensure the work environment is safe, and to respect the labor laws. Employers can expect that employees will come to work on time, work hard, have a good attitude, and do a good job. Mentors should emphasize that young women make sure that both they and their employers are aware of the rights and responsibilities of the employee before the job begins.

Knowing labor rights

A 'labor union' is a group of workers who have organized to protect their own rights and fight exploitation by employers. Labor unions negotiate on behalf of employees about things like salary, benefits, healthy working conditions, sexual harassment policies, and other issues that employees might have with their employers.

Some countries have developed laws to protect workers from being taken advantage of by their employers. In countries that do not have specific labor laws, there still needs to be a fair agreement between employers and employees about the duties, responsibilities, and rights of both. In every country, there are people who want to take advantage of the hard work of others without paying them or recognizing them for their work. Employers have to pay their employees for the time the employees have worked. Sometimes, employers will pay their employees one fixed amount of money no matter how many hours they work. This is called a salary. Other times, employees get paid depending on the number of hours that




A 'labor union' is a group of workers who have organized to protect their own rights and fight exploitation by employers. Labor unions negotiate on behalf of employees about things like salary, benefits, healthy working conditions, sexual harassment policies, and other issues that employees might have with their employers.



they work. Women are often paid less than men, even for the exact same work! In fact, women all over the world earn only 78% of what men earn performing the same jobs.⁴

Mentors should remind young women to ask detailed questions about their work environment! Young women should be aware of any and all risks or dangers that they will encounter in a new job before they begin the work.

Things like payment and working conditions need to be laid out in the employee's contract, which is an official document that both the employer and the employee must sign. Not all organizations will have a contract, but new employees should at least get an offer letter detailing the terms of their employment. A contract is an agreement between the employee and the employer that describes the duties and responsibilities of each. Contracts also discuss things like how much an employee will be paid and how often she will receive her paycheck, how much vacation time an employee gets, what happens if an employee is sick and must miss work, and other similar issues.



Mentors should remind young women to ask detailed questions about their work environment!
Young women should be aware of any and all risks or dangers that they will encounter in a new job before they begin the work.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. When should young women learn about the responsibilities associated with their job? How?
2. What are some things that young women have the right to expect from their workplace?
3. What are labor laws and what is their purpose?

⁴ Program M, *Working with Young Women: Empowerment, Rights, and Health*, 2009

4. What does it mean to take advantage of someone? Have the young women in the mentor group seen or heard of instances where women they know have been taken advantage of in the workplace?



Activity for mentoring session: “UNDERSTANDING CONTRACTS”

Mentors can lead a discussion about contracts. What kinds of things are in a contract that would be considered fair to the employee? What kinds of things would be missing from a contract that would be considered unfair to the employee? What are some of the things that young women should ask their employees to agree upon before they sign a contract or begin a job? How about things like what should happen if a young woman becomes pregnant? Or sick? Or one of her children is sick so she must stay home a few days?



***Activity for mentoring session:
“UNDERSTANDING RIGHTS IN THE WORKPLACE”***

Young women have rights in the workplace. It is very important that they understand their rights as workers. There are many people — both men and women — who believe in stereotypes about the ability of women to work in certain professions. Therefore, it is possible that the young women would not be treated fairly. Mentors can ask the young women in the group to consider the following statements about fairness in the workplace and decide whether they are true or false.

1. Men deserve to be paid more than women for the same work. (True/False)
2. An official contract that outlines the rights and responsibilities of the new employee is a very important document. (True/False)
3. A union protects the rights of workers—both women and men—and all workers have the right to join. (True/False)
4. If a man and a woman have the same job but the woman is a better and harder worker, the man should be picked to be the manager because he will probably do a better job than the woman. (True/False)
5. If a woman becomes pregnant, her boss has the right to fire her immediately. (True/False)



Learn from the experts: “UNDERSTANDING RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES”

Mentors should invite an organization or a government representative to talk to the young women about labor rights in their country, as well as to give the young women advice about how to find out about their rights and responsibilities in a new job. Young women should also receive information about resources to help them if they have specific questions or problems with their employer.



4. Addressing Sexual Harassment and Violence in the Workplace

It is very important for young women to set clear boundaries in the workplace. From the very first day, they must make it clear that they are at their jobs only to work and that any kind of sexual relationship or abusive (violent) relationship are absolutely not allowed. Sexual harassment is unwelcome verbal, visual, or physical conduct of a sexual nature that is severe or pervasive and affects working conditions or creates a hostile work environment.”⁵

In a workplace, some people have a lot of influence and some people do not have much influence. Some people have a lot of responsibilities, and others have fewer. Some people make a lot of money, and others do not make much. But no one has the right to sexually harass someone else or be violent toward someone else. It does not matter if someone seems powerful—no one has the right to hurt or harass or intimidate someone else.

Strategies to avoid sexual harassment and violence

Even when young women have the most appropriate behavior and dress, some people might still harass them or try to take advantage of them. And even if a young woman is not dressed in an appropriate way, no one has the right to harass her or force anything on her. If a young woman says no, that means no! It does not matter what she is wearing; she should not accept sexual harassment or violence under any circumstances.

Young women should not tolerate violence or harassment; if someone commits these acts once, he or she will commit them again with someone else. A young woman should try to get the problem fixed by talking to a co-worker or a supervisor. If there is a union at her workplace, she should inform the union and ask for help. If she continues to feel threatened, she should not remain at her job.

⁵ <http://www.equalrights.org>



Young women should rely on their inner strength to avoid people whose words and actions might harm them.⁶

Here are some strategies for young women who are experiencing sexual harassment or violence include:⁷

- Say “no” very clearly, loudly, and firmly.
- Write down what happened, including if anyone else saw the harassment. Keep this record in a safe place, not at work.
- Report the harassment to a supervisor in a letter and explain the problem and how the young woman would like it to be fixed. Keep copies of everything.

There are many resources for young women experiencing sexual harassment. Young women should be encouraged to seek help, even if it is embarrassing or they are uncertain how to explain what is happening. Some of the people available to help young women in this situation include:

- Trusted co-workers and/or supervisors
- Family members
- Mentors
- Police, especially units created to handle women’s complaints

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. Is sexual harassment or violence ever acceptable in the workplace? Why or why not? What can young women do if they experience sexual harassment or violence?
2. Often, people who are violent toward young women or try to sexually harass them are in higher, more powerful positions than the young women are. Why is this? How does this make it a more difficult situation for young women?
3. Although young women may feel physically threatened or scared that they will lose their jobs, sexual harassment must never be tolerated. Who are some people young women can ask for help if they feel scared?

⁶ AED, Girls' Success: Mentoring for Life Skills

⁷ <http://www.equalrights.org/publications/kyr/shwork.asp>

***Activity for mentoring session:*****“ROLE PLAY ABOUT SEXUAL HARASSMENT”**

Mentors can present the young women with the following situation: Aissa’s boss tries to touch her inappropriately, and he makes her feel uncomfortable. When she tells him to stop, he becomes nasty and threatens her job. The next day, he tells her that she will have to take a lower position and get paid less money. They both know it is because she refused to accept being sexually harassed by him. What would the young women do in the situation?

***Activity for mentoring session:*****“EXPAND KNOWLEDGE ABOUT RIGHTS AND ACCESS TO RESOURCES”**

Mentors might consider inviting in the local Chamber of Commerce or other experts with knowledge about labor rights in their country so that young women can learn more details about their rights and gain information about where to go and who to contact if they have questions or problems.

***Longer activity:*****“LEARNING FROM THE PAST HOW TO AVOID HARASSMENT AND VIOLENCE”**

Mentors can ask the young women to research famous cases of sexual harassment and/or violence that occurred in the context of their country and report on the outcome. How did the young woman handle the situation? Did she seek help from someone else? How did the society react? What happened to the person who committed the bad acts?

BUILDING A BUSINESS OF ONE'S OWN

Section VI outlines information about becoming an entrepreneur and starting a business. This section includes: ideas about the qualities that typical entrepreneurs have, some steps for developing a business plan, a sample business budget, methods for identifying resources to help start a business and ways to manage a growing business.

Starting a business is an exciting way for a young woman to turn her interests and strengths into a career. Mentors should remind young women that they can start their own businesses because, armed with information, ambition, and creativity, young women can do anything. In many countries, there is a misconception, or a wrong idea, that most businesspeople are men and that most businesses are owned by men. In fact, women are entering the business world and starting their own businesses—large and small—more and more every day, all over the world.

Starting a business requires a strong idea. Why would a certain business be successful? Who needs the product that it produces? Who would actually buy the product that it produces? What is the service that it does for the community? How will the product be produced? Where? And by whom? Where will the money come from to keep the business going? If a young woman wants to start her own business, she must answer all of these questions and more. She must plan carefully and be realistic about her goals.

It is also important to think about whether a young woman has the qualities that typical successful entrepreneurs have. Some qualities to consider include:

- high levels of energy and ambition
- a willingness to take risks and accept some set-backs
- self-confidence in ideas and abilities
- a support system to help when difficulties arise
- flexibility to deal with changes, uncertainty and failures
- the willingness to work alone and make one's own decisions
- a commitment to the business and lots of hard work

The mentor should encourage young women to reflect upon these qualities, engaging friends and families in the exercise. Even a small business entrepreneur requires many of these qualities to be successful.

Mentors are encouraged to find business owners and other experts to delivery mentoring sessions about building a business. These can be people from the community who have started successful businesses, representatives from NGOs that help business start-ups or representatives from other organizations focused on entrepreneurship and economic development.



1. Creating Start-up Checklists and Longer-term Plans

The first and most important step of starting an independent business is planning. Mentors should encourage young women to begin with the basics. What do they need to start a business?

Here are some things young women need to have when starting a business:

- An objective (this could be a product or service that the young woman wants to market, or sell, to the community)
- A business plan that includes a budget
- Capital (which is a business term for money)
- A marketing plan that outlines how they will advertise and sell their products/services.
- Workers to work in the business and make it run

Mentors should encourage young women who are considering to start a business to have both short-term and long-term goals. It is not easy to start a business, so goals should be realistic, especially short-term goals.

One very important short-term goal is also the most difficult part about starting a business: the goal of getting the business set up and running. A start-up checklist is a list of the tasks that need to be completed in order to start the business. It outlines the most basic steps that a young woman thinks need to be done before anything else.

Items on a start-up checklist should include things such as the following⁸:

- Write a business plan
- Create a preliminary budget
- Identify a source of capital
- Set up a plan to keep records
- Find a space to have the business
- Hire and train employees if necessary

⁸ <http://www.smallbusinessnotes.com/starting/startchklist.html>

2. Creating a Budget

Creating a budget is one of the most important steps in business planning. A well thought-out budget will help determine whether the business idea is likely to be profitable. A budget also helps the business owner to think through how revenue will be created and what kinds of costs they will encounter to produce their product or deliver their services. A budget is also important to communicate information to banks or other parties that might be interested in investing in the business or loaning the business money.

A well-developed budget will show: the expected sales revenue, the amount of money needed for materials, labor and other expenses and the anticipated profits. Put simply, a budget shows “sales — total cost = profit.” Budgets are usually created to plan for a whole year, but it is very important that a budget should be constantly reviewed and updated based on actual sales, costs and new information about the business.



BINTA'S CUSTOM GARMENT BUSINESS

BUDGET: 1/1/2011 - 12/31/2011

Revenue	Budget	Actual	Variance
Sales of custom-dyed cloth	3,000	2,500	(500)
Custom Embroidery	2,000	4,000	2,000
Hotel Sales (curtains, etc.)	8,000	9,000	1,000
TOTAL REVENUE	13,000	15,500	2,500
Cost of Goods			
Cloth	1,000	2,000	1,000
Thread	350	350	0
Dye	150	100	(50)
Shipping	200	300	100
TOTAL COST OF GOODS	1,700	2,750	1,050
Operating Expenses			
Salaries	5,000	5,500	500
Telephone and Utilities	75	50	(25)
Rent	600	600	0
Machine Maintenance and Repair	120	80	(40)
Advertising	60	30	(30)
Taxes and Licenses	150	150	0
TOTAL EXPENSES	6,005	6,410	405
Net Profit	5,295	6,340	1,045

Think carefully about these numbers and use the experience of other start-up businesses as a reference. It is best to be conservative with this estimate.

Keep in mind that some costs, "variable costs", like cloth will change as the amount of product or services you sell changes. Other costs, "fixed costs", such as rent will not change based on your sales revenue.

Remember to include all of the costs you will have, even if they are one-time costs. In many businesses, the first year is very expensive because there are start-up costs.

A budget is a "working document". It is both a plan and a record of what actually happened. The "Actual" column should be updated regularly to see how the plan compared with reality.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. What are some of the things a young woman needs to consider when she is thinking of starting a business?
2. Why is planning important when a young woman is starting a business?



Activity for mentoring session: "SAIMA'S STORY"

Read the excerpt of Nicholas Kristof's article, "The Women's Crusade."⁹

In a slum outside the grand old city of Lahore, a woman named Saima Muhammad used to dissolve into tears every evening. A round-faced woman with thick black hair tucked into a head scarf, Saima had barely a rupee, and her deadbeat husband was unemployed and not particularly employable. He was frustrated and angry, and he coped by beating Saima each afternoon. Their house was falling apart, and Saima had to send her young daughter to live with an aunt, because there wasn't enough food to go around.

"My sister-in-law made fun of me, saying, 'You can't even feed your children,'" recalled Saima when Nick met her two years ago on a trip to Pakistan. "My husband beat me up. My brother-in-law beat me up. I had an awful life." Saima's husband accumulated a debt of more than \$3,000, and it seemed that these loans would hang over the family for generations. Then when Saima's second child was born and turned out to be a girl as well, her mother-in-law, a harsh, blunt woman named Sharifa Bibi, raised the stakes.

"She's not going to have a son," Sharifa told Saima's husband, in front of her. "So you should marry again. Take a second wife." Saima was shattered and ran off sobbing. Another wife would leave even less money to feed and educate the children. And Saima herself would be marginalized in the household, cast off like an old sock. For days Saima walked around in a daze, her eyes red; the slightest incident would send her collapsing into hysterical tears.

9 *NYTimes Magazine* edition of "Saving the World's Women." 17 Aug 09. <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/23/magazine/23Women-t.html>

It was at that point that Saima signed up with the Kashf Foundation, a Pakistani microfinance organization that lends tiny amounts of money to poor women to start businesses. Kashf is typical of microfinance institutions, in that it lends almost exclusively to women, in groups of 25. The women guarantee one another's debts and meet every two weeks to make payments and discuss a social issue, like family planning or schooling for young women. A Pakistani woman is often forbidden to leave the house without her husband's permission, but husbands tolerate these meetings because the women return with cash and investment ideas.

Saima took out a \$65 loan and used the money to buy beads and cloth, which she transformed into beautiful embroidery that she then sold to merchants in the markets of Lahore. She used the profit to buy more beads and cloth, and soon she had an embroidery business and was earning a solid income — the only one in her household to do so. Saima took her elder daughter back from the aunt and began paying off her husband's debt.

When merchants requested more embroidery than Saima could produce, she paid neighbors to assist her. Eventually 30 families were working for her, and she put her husband to work as well — “under my direction,” she explained with a twinkle in her eye. Saima became the tycoon of the neighborhood, and she was able to pay off her husband's entire debt, keep her daughters in school, renovate the house, connect running water and buy a television.

“Now everyone comes to me to borrow money, the same ones who used to criticize me,” Saima said, beaming in satisfaction. “And the children of those who used to criticize me now come to my house to watch TV.”

Saima exudes self-confidence as she offers a grand tour of her home and work area, ostentatiously showing off the television and the new plumbing. She doesn't even pretend to be subordinate to her husband. He has become more impressed with females in general: Saima had a third child, also a girl, but now that's not a problem. “Girls are just as good as boys,” he explained.

***Discussion questions for the article:***

- How did Saima start her business?
- What were some of the challenges Saima faced, and how did she overcome them?
- Where did Saima get the money to start the business?
How did she keep it going?
- How did Saima's business change her life? How did it change her relationships with her family members and with the members of her husband's family?
- If Saima had a start-up checklist, imagine what would be on it.

***Longer Activity: "INTERVIEWING BUSINESSPEOPLE"***

Mentors can ask the young women to interview someone in the community who started a business and then report back to the group with what they found. Basic interview questions include: WHAT is the business? WHERE is it? WHO participates in it? WHEN was it established? WHY did the person start a business, and WHY did that person start that particular business? And, most importantly, HOW did the person do it?

3. Finding Resources to Start a Business

Investors

It takes a great idea and a lot of creativity to start a business, but it also requires money to start a business. People who have money and are looking for a good business that might need their money to start or expand are called investors. They are willing to “invest,” or loan money, to a person who has a good idea and a solid, detailed plan to start a business. Investors do not have to be wealthy people; often, they are simply people who believe in another person’s idea.



Big and successful businesses

can be started with only a small amount of money, as long as the business is based on a good idea and the business person is diligent about planning and management. Young women should think about whom they know and trust that might support them for a time until they can repay them using the money earned from her business. Young women should be very careful about becoming indebted in ways that put themselves at risk for sexual favors in return for the loan money.

Sometimes, young women will decide to take out a loan from a bank in order to start a business. Young women who do not have experience dealing with banks should go with someone who they trust when discussing the terms of a loan. It is a good idea for young women to speak to an employee of the bank and get a lot of information before she agrees to anything. She should ask for papers that explain

the bank's rules, and she should always read every single word and make sure she understands everything before she signs anything. Mentors should make contacts with community members who have experience dealing with banks and are trusted financial resources so that they can help the young women if they have questions.

Anytime a young woman borrows money from another party, she should have a written agreement with them stating exactly how much she borrowed, the date that she borrowed it, the amount of interest that is being charged, and how much time she has to pay the money back. She should keep one copy of the agreement and the other party should keep a copy too. Both should also sign the agreement.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. What is an investor and why are they important to someone who wants to start a new business?
2. What is a loan? What is interest? What do young women have to be careful about when dealing with banks?
3. Why do businesspeople have to keep such careful track of what they do with their money (how much money they have, how much they spend, how much they lose, and how much they borrow)?
4. What does it mean to take inventory? Why is taking inventory so important for business-owners? Why is organization in general so important for businesspeople?



Activity for mentoring session: "RAISING MONEY FOR A GOOD IDEA"

This exercise is intended to help the young women get excited about their ideas and think about how to fund them, which is the essence of starting a business. The young women should be divided into teams of several people each, and they should come up with an idea that would make a great business. Perhaps they want to start a local newspaper in their community because residents have been complaining that they do not receive any news. They should develop the idea, think



about a basic business plan, and then present their idea to the other groups of young women in the most persuasive way possible. They should imagine that the other young woman in the room might be willing to invest in their idea.



Ask the experts: "GETTING ADVICE FROM BANKERS"

The more exposure young women have to financial experts, the more comfortable and confident they will be handling money, going to banks, and being financially independent. Banks need clients, so they should have employees who are willing to take the time to explain banking terms and procedures to the young women in the mentor's group. The mentor might be able to arrange a group trip to a local bank, or they might even be able to invite a bank employee to speak with the young women. The banker should discuss the different types of bank accounts that exist and how to open accounts, as well as different options to save and invest money. He or she should also give a detailed presentation about how to apply for a loan from a bank.

Micro-Credit

"Micro-credit" (also known as "micro-finance" or "micro-loans") programs give small loans to people who want to start their own businesses but do not have the ability to borrow from banks. The majority of people who receive these loans are women. Micro-credit programs give a small sum of money to jump-start a business and the loan must be repaid. The programs also teach the participants about important financial concepts, including how to save money, how to borrow money, and how to repay money.

"Recipients"—people who receive the small loans—often meet in groups with a mentor who explains how they can manage their money. Recipients trade ideas about how to turn very simple and small-scale business ideas (for example, Saima's idea in the newspaper article) to larger and more successful operations. The program's general goal is for the recipients of the micro-loans to be able to eventually sustain their own income. Recipients of micro-loans almost never have previous experience in business, but they form networks and tend to be flexible and supportive of each other. Micro-credit allows women to employ themselves by turning their ideas into a small business.

Mentors should tell their mentoring groups that although only 10% of the loans that micro-finance institutions (the institutions who distribute the micro-loans) give go to young people because they are at “high risk” of failing to repay the loans, micro-loans are still an important option for their groups to keep in mind for the future. The young women in the group could also partner with older women in the community to secure loans together.

Saving and Lending Groups

Another strategy to secure loans is to join or start a savings and internal lending group where members all contribute savings to loan out to other members at a set interest rate. Members take turns receiving loans and also make money from the interest paid by borrowers. There are many organizations that will help groups set up these savings and lending groups and train members. The important thing to remember is that the members of these groups count on each other for success and that group members receive the benefit of the interest payments.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. What is micro-credit? How is it different from getting a big loan from a bank?
2. Why do micro-credit institutions tend not to give loans to young women? Are there still opportunities for young women to take advantage of micro-credit programs?
3. Can people form their own groups to access loans? How is this different than micro-credit?



Activity for mentoring session:

“BRAINSTORMING IDEAS FOR MICRO-FINANCED PROJECTS”

The mentor can lead an exercise that encourages the young women to be excited about micro-credit, fosters their creativity, and sparks their determination to turn a business idea into a reality. She can ask each young woman to imagine that she has received a \$50 micro-loan and ask each person to use fifteen minutes to come up with a plan for how she would invest it to start a business. The young women should remember to use the lessons they learned earlier in the *Guide*, including formulating a solid idea and a business plan that develops the idea into a business.



Longer Activity:

“FORMING PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN WOMEN OF ALL GENERATIONS”

Local micro-finance institutions may be much more willing to grant small loans to young women if they have a partner who has more experience in the workforce and with finances. The mentor and the young women can invite a group of older women to a group session, make a presentation about micro-credit, lead a brainstorming activity about various business ideas, and begin to discuss possible partnerships between the generations of women.



Longer Activity:

“MAPPING MICRO-CREDIT AND SAVINGS AND LENDING GROUPS”

The group can gather information about micro-credit institutions in their area. This information can include details about training that the micro-credit institution might provide and the requirements for participation. Groups can also gather information about organizations that help to establish community or group-led savings and loan funds.



4. Identifying Suppliers and Customers

Businesses deal with two major groups of people: suppliers, who are the people who sell them the materials that they need in order to produce a product; and customers, who are the people who buy the things that the business produces or use the service that the business provides. One of the first questions a young woman will ask herself when she is thinking about starting her own business is, “Who will buy what I am producing?” She needs to identify her “market,” or the people who are willing and able to buy her product. These people are her customers. As she is developing her business plan, she must figure out how she will get the materials to produce her product—the people from whom she gets these materials are her suppliers.

Young women should look for two things when looking for a supplier: people who can offer the highest quality of goods, and people who can offer the lowest price. This is a difficult balance to strike. A business’ customers probably will not continue to buy the products of a business if the products are not good quality. They also may not be able to buy the products of a business if the products are of good quality, but they are too expensive. Young women need to keep in mind that customers want quality and a reasonable price.

Mentors can explain that a supplier can be viewed as a partner because there has to be mutual trust (the businesswoman trusts that the supplier will supply quality goods on time, and the supplier trusts that the businesswoman will pay for the goods and come back again) and there is a common goal: both depend on money from customers. Therefore, young women may want to seek suppliers who they view as partners. They might want to seek out other women, for example, to form partnerships.

A “supply chain” consists of all of the steps needed to produce a product. For example, making a jar of olive oil takes many steps. It starts with a farmer who



plants the olives, waters them often, and takes care of them. Then someone else collects the ripe olives. Another person takes the ripe olives to a location where the olives can be pressed. Then someone else puts the olive oil into glass bottles. Another person puts labels on the glass bottles. Finally, someone loads all of the bottles filled with oil into a truck to be driven to a store and sold or to a port and shipped to another country. Then a bottle of olive oil sells in a store, and its cost has to cover all of the people mentioned above. But not everyone is paid equally! And research has shown one unfortunate fact: women tend to be responsible for the steps involving hard, manual labor, which are also the steps that receive the least amount of money.¹⁰



Young women should think about what they do as one piece in a bigger puzzle to create a product. Mentors can help them find and identify the other pieces in their puzzle and connect with them, forming a strong and trusting supply chain. These people can look out for one another and make sure that even the woman who has to collect the olives or press them is getting paid a fair amount.

Just as young women must keep track of the money that their business makes, spends, saves, and loses, they must also keep track of all of the things that their business owns. This can be everything from the computers and pens in the office, to the hundreds of items on the shelves if they have a store. It can be the sewing machines and needles if they have a company that produces clothes, or it can be the tools and the machines if they have a factory. Taking “inventory” means keeping track of all the items that a business has. Young women must take inventory to make sure that none of the employees are stealing items from the business and that she is accurately tracking what the business owns.

¹⁰ USAID, http://www.usaid.gov/our_work/cross-cutting_programs/wid/eg/gate_valuechain.html

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. What is a supplier? What is a customer?
2. What are the two things that most customers want when they are buying a product or using a service?
3. How can young women form business partnerships that empower other women?
4. What is a supply chain? What role do women tend to play in the supply chain? How can women change the role that they usually play in the supply chain?



Activity for mentoring session:

"MAKING CONNECTIONS IN THE MENTOR GROUP"

The young women can pick a product that they would like to produce. They should think of every step of the production process. Each young woman in the group should be responsible for a different part of the process, even if it is a very small part. She should write her role in the process on a sheet of paper. The young women should line up in order of which step they play in the process, holding up the sheet of paper. The mentor can help them understand that this line of different steps and activities is a supply chain.



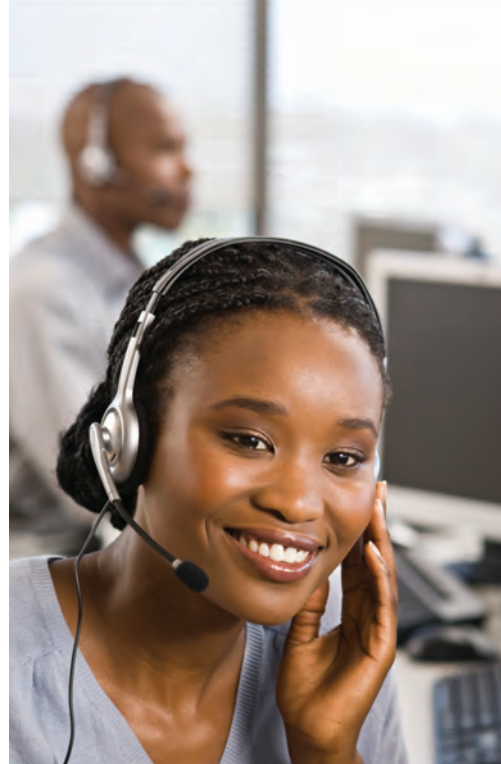
Longer activity:

"UNDERSTANDING HOW SUPPLY CHAINS WORK"

The young women should work in teams to pick a product in the community and figure out its supply chain. They should interview the people involved in producing the product at every level, from the very beginning to the very end. Are the people involved women or men? Which jobs do women tend to do and which jobs do men tend to do in the supply chain? Can the young women ask (or guess) how much money the women involved make? And the men? Can the young women think of any ways for everyone on the supply chain to earn more money?

5. Employing and Supervising Others

The best employers and supervisors earn the respect of their employees. Employees who respect their employers and want to help them succeed will work the hardest. Young women who have a position supervising others should focus on motivating their employees because people do their best work when they are motivated and feel good about the work that they do. Young women who have positions of power should always remember how they felt when they were not in a high position. Employers should have high expectations of their employees, but they should also give them reasons, or “incentives,” to work hard. Young women should also make sure their employees clearly understand their rights and responsibilities.



Mentors should help young women understand that a good manager or supervisor is someone who is a good listener who is open to the ideas that their employees have, not someone who enjoys being in a powerful position. Good employers want to know what their employees think, so they might give them a survey or meet with them individually so that employees have the opportunity to share their ideas about how the business is run. Employers often evaluate their employees at least once a year to identify the strengths and weaknesses of their employees so that employees can know what they are doing well and what they need to improve.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. Why will employees who respect their employers work the hardest?
2. What are some of the things that the young women want from their supervisor as a new employee in a low-level position? Should they provide those things for their employees when they become supervisors?
3. Why is it important for employers to ask their employees what they think?
4. What can employers and employees learn from yearly evaluations of employees' work?



Activity for mentoring session:

"LEARNING FROM THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF OTHERS"

Mentors can ask the young women to look back at their former teachers and previous employers and remember their positive and negative qualities. What about each former supervisor made the young women want to work hard? What about each former supervisor made the young women want to leave the job or the class? How can the young women learn from both the positive traits and the mistakes and weaknesses of others?



Longer activity: "IDENTIFYING GOOD SUPERVISORS IN THE COMMUNITY"

Each young woman can visit a company or workplace that interests her and ask to speak to someone who holds a position supervising some of the employees. She should conduct an interview and ask what the person does to motivate his or her employees, how the person makes sure employees fulfill their responsibilities, and how the person learns from his or her employees.

6. Tracking Progress over Time

After a young woman has begun her own business, she has already accomplished one of her most important short-term goals, which is getting a business started and running smoothly. Then she can begin thinking about her long-term goals. In order to reach her long-term goals, she has to have a plan for how the business will run and how it can make the most progress. Mentors should encourage young women to constantly reflect on themselves and ask what they can do better. The same is true in business; business-owners should constantly reflect on the business plan and evaluate whether or not it is the best, most efficient way for the business to be run in order to achieve the most success.

Keeping excellent financial records can help a businesswoman identify the periods that her business was successful and then try to understand why it was so successful during that time. Women who have their own businesses should also ask their employees and co-workers to give regular evaluations of how they feel the company is doing.



As a business grows, its owners want to protect it and make sure it is not vulnerable to competition or to an economic downturn. Young women should study other businesses or companies that might provide competition to see how they can improve their business and make it more efficient. Young women should welcome “innovative techniques,” or ways of doing things that are new and creative. The stronger a business is, the less likely that another business will threaten its existence. Also, strong businesses that are run well and have their finances in order are better able to survive if a community or country goes through a period of economic hardship. Businesses that have good relations with the local community, take care of the needs of their customers, pay their employees fairly and treat them well, and keep good relations with their suppliers will be better able to withstand economic challenges.

A young woman who has started a business and managed it so that it can run smoothly should remember that she is a role model for other women of all ages. Mentors can suggest that successful female business owners start an association of businesses in their community that promote the employment of other women and give them the tools to start their own businesses.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. Why should young women who have started businesses constantly evaluate the past in order to get better in the future?
2. What can businesswomen do to protect their businesses from other companies, or from economic difficulties?
3. How can a young woman who has started her own business be a mentor to other women? How can she help other women succeed in the business world?



Longer activity:

“ENCOURAGING LOCAL BUSINESSWOMEN TO FORM AN ASSOCIATION”

Young women can do a community mapping exercise where they go out in groups to find out which businesses are run by women or employ females as supervisors. What types of businesses are female-run? Do they have partnerships with other women? The young women can propose the idea of starting a community association for businesswomen and women interested in starting their own companies or working in the business world.





PERSONAL FINANCE

Finance deals with how people manage money, and personal finance means how people manage their own money. Should young women save their money? Spend their money? What should they spend it on? How can they know how much money they have? How can they figure out how much money they can give to their families but still have enough to pay for their own expenses?

Working women have the right to control the money that they earn. Therefore, mentors should help young women understand basic concepts of personal finance. If young women do not understand some important lessons about managing money, someone else might think that he or she can control her money.

1. Saving Money

Making money is exciting, spending it is easy, and saving it is hard! Of course, young women will have to spend a certain amount of the money they make, but mentors should encourage young women to try to save as much money as they can—even if it is just a tiny bit! There will always be occasions in the future when a young woman will need money. It might be an emergency, it might be to buy a house, or it might be to start a business. A young woman who saves money has power because she has the ability to do what she wants in the future. A young woman who saves money also has more security because she knows that if something happens in the future or if she has an emergency, she has money saved away.

Young women can open bank accounts that allow them to keep their money in a safe place, and one that other people cannot access. They should try to put money in the account as often as they can.

DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion Questions:

1. What are some reasons that young women might want to save money instead of spend it?
2. What are some reasons that saving money is very difficult for people to do? What are some of the demands that that other people have on the money of young women?
3. How can a young woman convince her family members that it is better to save a little bit of money each month than to spend it?



Activity for the Mentoring Session: "WHY PEOPLE SAVE"

All people save things. It might be a favorite possession or a letter from someone or an article from an old newspaper or a blanket from when the person was a baby. Mentors can ask the young women what they save and why. People save money for the same reasons they save other things: for comfort, for security, in case they need it in the future, or for people in their families. If young women can understand



that saving money is just as important as saving a favorite possession, they will be able to have more financial security.



Longer Activity: "RECORDING SAVINGS"

The young women in the mentor group may not have any source of money, but if they do, then mentors can suggest that they begin to save money in a safe place and keep a record of how much money they save. Even tiny amounts of money are important because young women will make a habit of putting any extra money aside for the future.



Longer Activity: "GETTING EXCITED ABOUT SAVING"

Saving is difficult for many people because it often seems as though even if they spent all of their income, there still is not enough money to pay for all of their expenses. Therefore, mentors should encourage young women to be excited about saving and to save money with a goal in mind. For example, only 1% of landowners in the world are women.¹¹ Some young women in the group might make it a goal to own their own house and land.



¹¹ Kristof, Nicholas and WuDunn, Sheryl. "The Women's Crusade." *The New York Times*. Aug 17 2009. <<http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/23/magazine/23Women-t.html#>>

2. Spending Money

There may be a lot of demands on the money a young woman makes (or her “income”), between helping to support her family and taking care of her own needs. Mentors should encourage young women to use a budget to determine how she divides up her income. A budget helps a young woman know exactly how she spends her money, and it helps her to make adjustments in spending habits if she needs to. Budgets should be logical, realistic, and based on a young woman’s needs. Does it make sense for a young woman to spend all of her income on one thing? Probably not, because each person has multiple needs.

Some items that young women can put in her budget include:

- Rent
- Food
- Amount to give to family members
- Taxes
- Medicine/trips to doctor
- Mobile phone
- Clothing
- Savings

Young women need to make sure that the total that she spends on all of these different items is not more than her income. For young women who must pay for a very big expense (a house or a medical operation, for example) and for young women who are starting their own businesses, they might need to use “credit.” Credit allows people to buy something without actually having enough money to pay for it, and then they can pay the money that they owe back over a certain period of time.

Mentors should remind young women that it often takes time and practice to learn how to spend and save responsibly. They should learn as much as they can about finance so that they can apply financial concepts and lessons to their own lives. They should talk to other young women about how they manage money, both so they can trade advice and so that they can learn from the mistakes of others. As

young women get older and have more experiences, they tend to gain more control over their money and make better decisions.

DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion Questions:

1. What is a budget? Why is it important for every young woman to have a budget?
2. What is credit? In what situations might people need to use credit?



Activity for the Mentoring Session: "CREATING A PERSONAL BUDGET"

Young women should develop a budget for their personal finances. This type of budget will include expenses and income, just like the business budget discussed in an earlier section. A budget can help young women plan, but it is just as important to keep track of expenses and income to see how the plan compares with what actually happened. This is so important because then young women can make better informed decisions about how to spend their money and how to find ways to save their money.



Activity for the Mentoring Session: "PRACTICING WISE SPENDING"

Mentors can tell each young woman that she has a certain amount of money for one week and ask her to write down exactly how she would spend it. Each young woman can present her budget to the rest of the group, and they can ask if she has considered all of the important details including rent, food, electricity, water, day-care, etc.



DEVELOPING A SUCCESSFUL CAREER

Each young woman will have a different idea of what she considers “successful.” Some young women will consider themselves successful when they reach a high position in their job. Others will consider themselves successful when they get to have a job that they find very interesting, one that perfectly matches their interests and strengths. Others will consider themselves successful if they can make enough money to take care of themselves and their families.

A young woman’s definition of success may change throughout her life, but she should always work to get to a point in her career where she feels successful.

1. Assuming More Responsibility

The more experience someone has working, the more knowledge she has gained about the best way to do things. When young women have knowledge and experience, they should also have more responsibility. Sometimes, employers offer their employees raises, or more money. Sometimes, employers offer their employees promotions, or a higher position with more responsibility. But there are many times that an employee will have to ask for these things, and young women who have done a good job at their offices, learned how their offices work, and are hard workers should have the confidence to ask for more responsibility and a more challenging role.

Employers give their employees more responsibility when they trust them that they will do a good job. Having more responsibility may mean a young woman can make more decisions on her own. It may mean she is in charge of supervising some of her co-workers. Assuming more responsibilities requires a young woman to have the confidence and the inner strength to quickly adapt to a new situation and understand that she is in charge of making sure new and more difficult tasks get done.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. What are some of the positive things about assuming more responsibility in the workplace?
2. What are some of the challenges?



Activity for mentoring session:

"SEEING HOW HARD WORKERS GET MORE RESPONSIBILITY OVER TIME"

Mentors can provide an example of a woman working her way up from a low position to a high one. The young women in the group can discuss how the woman assumed more and more responsibility as time went on. They can also reflect on how they have been given more responsibilities as they have grown from little girls to young women.



2. Taking Leadership Roles

Leadership is about having the skills and the confidence to assume a position leading others. A leader does not have to be the boss, and a leader does not even have to be in a high position. A leader is someone who takes initiative, thinks creatively, and gains the respect of her coworkers and supervisors. A leader is someone who has good ideas and can bring other people to recognize and support her ideas. People can have leadership qualities even if they have never held a job before. A young woman can be a leader without having experience being a boss. A manager is someone who supervises other people. Managers get to be managers because they have experience. Through their experience, they develop leadership skills. Possessing leadership skills makes it easier for people to become managers and to be given more responsibilities. Someone who is in a management position is responsible for what happens, whether what happens is good or bad. Managers and leaders always make mistakes, but the best managers and leaders learn from their mistakes.

Young women sometimes have to work extra hard to be promoted, or be given a better job, by her supervisor. In every single country in the world, men tend to hold most of the highest positions. For example, although there are 1.2 billion women in the world who are employed—a number which makes up 40% of all paid workers—women hold less than 20% of all management jobs. If women hold up half the sky, like the saying says, they should be confident that they deserve to be managers and leaders too.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. Can someone who has never worked before still be a leader? How? Can someone who has never worked before still be a manager? Why not?
2. Who are some famous leaders in your community? Your country? In the world? What makes them good leaders?
3. What are some leadership qualities? How can leadership qualities be developed?



Activity for mentoring session: "YOUNG WOMEN AS LEADERS"

All over the world, men tend to hold more positions of power than women. Why? Are men better leaders and managers than women? Do women have as many opportunities to be leaders and managers as men do? How might this change in the future? What can the young women in the mentoring group do to be leaders and managers?



**Learn from the experts:
"LEARNING FROM EFFECTIVE LEADERS"**

Bring in a guest speaker who the mentor considers a good leader or a good manager. Preferably, the mentor would bring in a woman, but a male speaker would also be fine. Ask the person to give his or her advice on how to be a good manager and a good leader. Please ask them to recognize the difference between a leader and a manager, and to talk about each separately. In some places, it can be more difficult for women to reach management positions, but they should never think that they cannot be leaders even if they are not in a high position.



3. Taking the Next Career Step

With the guidance of the mentor, young women have learned to always keep short-term and long-term goals in mind. Throughout their careers, young women should always be thinking of how they can fulfill their goals. Each experience, even if it seems unrelated to a young woman's interests or objectives, adds something to her life and teaches her something. As a young woman gains more experience working, she should focus more and more on following her dreams and figuring out how to learn the skills to get the jobs that allow her to both support herself and help her family, and also to fulfill her goals.

Young women should not fear taking another step in their career; rather, they should see each step as one closer to their goals. Earlier in the careers of young women, a positive attitude and good employability skills made up for lack of experience. Later in their careers, women should have a wide variety of experiences that give them the knowledge to advance in their careers. Young women should also not be afraid to teach themselves the skills that they feel they are lacking. If they have the opportunity, they can always consider more schooling. Young women can even offer to intern, or to work for free or very low pay at a job to learn about the work and learn the skills required to get the job.

Translating skills from one job to another

Although one job may seem totally different than the next job a young woman receives, there are actually many things that will be the same. The employability skills discussed earlier in this manual will always be very useful, including good communication skills, the ability to work in teams, a strong work ethic, and leadership qualities. Good relationships with co-workers and supervisors will be important in any job.



QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. What are some of the things young women will always be able to apply to any job?
2. Why is it important for young women to take the initiative to figure out what they still have to learn in order to get the job that meets their goals?
3. What is an internship? How can it help a young woman get closer to getting her dream job?



Activity for mentoring session:

"GETTING COMFORTABLE WITH TRANSITION"

The act of "transition," or moving from one thing to another, is very difficult for people all over the world because people become accustomed to one situation and may find a new situation intimidating or disappointing at first. Relating job transitions to school transitions may help young women understand that transitions may often seem like big changes, but in reality people already have many of the tools they need to begin something new. The mentor can begin a discussion with the young women about the various transitions they made during their school years, moving from one class to another.



Learn from the experts: "TRANSITION FROM ONE JOB TO ANOTHER"

Mentors can bring in a panel of working women and men to discuss their experiences moving from one job to another. How did they adapt to new environments? How did they stay motivated from job to job?

4. Balancing Work with Family

All over the world, young women play a very important role in their families. Young women tend to have many responsibilities around the house, and these chores help their families function. However, young women can also help their families by pursuing a career outside of the house. When young women work, either inside or outside of the house, they are helping their families.

Sometimes, when young women decide they want to work outside of the house, family members question this decision and worry about how this change will affect the household. To help young women talk with their families about working outside the home, a mentor should prepare them to address questions such as:

1. How will your new job affect our family and your responsibilities?
2. How will you stay safe traveling to your job and while you are working?
3. What do you plan to do with the money you earn?
4. How will having a job affect your eligibility for marriage?

Every family is different and young women will receive different responses when they talk with their family about their career goals. Mentors should encourage young women to confidently state all of the benefits that having a job and a career will bring to themselves and their families.

Maintaining healthy relationships with family members

Having a job is hard work! It takes up a lot of time and requires a lot of energy. Mentors should be prepared for young women to report changing dynamics within their families once they start working outside of the house. Some family members might want the working woman to give all of the money that she makes to her family. Others may feel angry because the young woman is not around as much to talk or play or work around the house. It can be very difficult for young women to perform a lot of household chores in addition to their jobs. Young women can explain to their families that they need help to perform the tasks that they used to do in the house. The family can divide up the chores in a more fair way. Whereas

women have an average of 4.5 extra hours of work after their official work day ends, men have an average of just 1.5 hours of extra work in the house. How can this difference be more balanced?

A young woman's income, or the money that she makes from her job, also needs to be split up fairly. Each young woman will decide to do something different with her income, and each young woman will have a different agreement with her family. No one has the right to take a young woman's money that she has earned from doing work. If family members say that a young woman has to give up her entire income, mentors can suggest that the young woman automatically save some money in a bank or store it somewhere safe before she gives the rest of the money to the family. This will ensure that the young woman is able to keep some money for herself as well.

Balancing children and work

All over the world, women must face difficult decisions when it comes to balancing their children and their jobs. Women often miss their children a lot when they are at work. They might worry that their children are not being properly cared for while they are busy working. They might be afraid that they will not know their children as well if they spend time working instead of caring for their children. Those are some of the hard things for working mothers, but there are many good things too. Women who work are excellent role models for their children. They show their children that it is important for people to work hard. They can teach their children the skills that they learn from their jobs. Women who work are trying to help their





families. They want to give their children a better life. Mothers who work tend to spend 90% of their income on the benefit of their families, whereas men spend on average 30-40% on the benefit of their families.

In a community, every person needs to be helped at some point and working mothers need help from family friends, neighbors, friends, and other people who they trust to look after the children while the mothers are working. It is important for mothers to maintain close relationships with their children. Working mothers must juggle many responsibilities at home and at their jobs, so they must learn how to “prioritize” — how to put things in order of importance. The health, well-being, and care of her children will always be one of a working mother’s top priorities. Her job and/or career is another top priority.

Working mothers can find ways to balance taking care of their children with their careers. They can arrange to be home with the children as much as possible in the evening when the children are home from school. They can show their children pictures of the place that they work so that the children can imagine where they are during the day. They can write the children notes to read during the day if the children miss their moms. They can give the children a picture of the whole family together and remind the children that the family is still a family even if the mother is working.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES



Discussion questions

1. What are some reasons why family members might be upset when young women pursue careers outside of the home?
2. What are some things young women can say to family members who are upset when they begin working outside of the home?
3. How can mothers balance work and caring for children?
4. What does it mean “to prioritize?” What are some examples of priorities that young women may have? How can young women make decisions based on their priorities?

**Activity for mentoring session: "PRACTICE FOR REAL-LIFE ISSUES"**

Mentors should encourage young women to act out scenarios that can prepare them for some of the tough situations they may encounter with their families when they begin working. General themes for the scenarios include:

- How a working woman can support her family while keeping some money for herself.

Sample scenario: A young woman's older brothers demand that she give them all of the money that she makes in her job. How can she handle the situation?

- How a working woman can manage her time so that she can do her work and also help around the house.

Sample scenario: A young woman's sisters complain that she never helps with cooking anymore because she is always at work, and when she gets home she is too tired to clean. How can she handle the situation?

- How a working woman can convince her husband that she will benefit the family by working outside of the house.

Sample scenario: A young woman's husband worries that she will be too independent if she works outside of the house and that she will not give the same care and attention to him or to their children. How can she handle the situation?

- How a working woman can help change the mentality of people in the community who are against the idea of women working outside of the house.

Sample scenario: A young woman's friends do not understand why she would prefer to work outside of the home at a tough job instead of staying inside the home where she knows she is safe and can be with her family and friends. How can she handle the situation?



Longer activity: "STARTING A COMMUNITY DAY-CARE"

The members of the mentoring group could start their own day-care program for the children of any mothers in the group and working mothers in the community. The working mothers in the community might get to know each other better through their participation in the day-care, and they can begin to trade advice and seek help from each other.



Learn from the Experts Activity:

"SEEKING ADVICE FOR BALANCING FAMILY AND WORK"

Mentors can contact several working women (they may be friends of the mentors, members of the mentors' families, or respected women in the community) and ask them to speak to the young women in the group about the challenges that they faced and how they dealt with these challenges. Mentors should also encourage the young women to seek advice from the working women who they know in dealing with the challenges of maintaining healthy relationships with their families.



Example CV for Recent Secondary School Graduate

CAROL MOYO
123 Governor's Lane
Kasungu, Malawi
Phone: 26599345555
Email: carolm@yahoo.com

CAREER OBJECTIVE:

A self-motivated and resourceful high school graduate who is seeking a challenging role in a successful, growing organization in the health field.

CAREER PROFILE:

Excellent communication and organization skills. Experienced coordinator for events and fundraising programs. Driven to succeed and achieve organizational goals.

WORK EXPERIENCE:

Intern, Zomba Regional Commission, 2009

Working in the Office of Administration, my responsibilities included coordinating the schedule of staff, preparing memos, arranging meetings and organizing a fund-raising campaign.

VOLUNTEER/EXTRA-CURRICULAR EXPERIENCE:

Mulanje Mission Hospital, 2009

Organized a local fundraising drive that increased the amount of donations by 30% to support patients in need of medication.

Treasurer, Mwamba Secondary School Student Council, 2008

Responsibilities included creating a budget for the Student Council, planning events, and tracking expenses.

SKILLS:

Familiarity with Microsoft Word and Excel. Experience with budget preparations and fund-raising.

ACADEMIC EXPERIENCE:

Malawi School Certificate of Education with 20 points,
Mwamba Secondary School.

Make sure to include a reference to your long-term career goals.

Highlight all of your experience-including volunteer and school-based activities. This should tell them about you as a person and a worker.

Girls have many skills that they learn through school, family responsibilities, etc.



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