



Advanced High School

National FFA Organization

Lesson AHS.8

SKILL DEVELOPMENT: EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

Unit.

Stage One of Development-ME

Problem Area.

Who Am I in Light of Serving Others?

Precepts.

15: Demonstrate exemplary employability skills.

National Standards.

NL-ENG.K-12.8-Students use a variety of technological and information resources to gather and synthesize information and to create and communicate knowledge.



Student Learning Objectives. As a result of this lesson, the student will...

- 1 Identify the competencies, skills, and personal qualities needed to succeed in today's workplace.
- 2 Develop a plan for advancing his or her competencies, skills, and personal qualities that employers seek.



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Time. Instruction time for this lesson: 50 minutes.



Resources

Carnevale, A. P., L. J. Gainer, and A. S. Meltzer *Workplace Basics: The Essential Skills Employers Want*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, 1990.



Tools, Equipment, and Supplies

- ✓ Writing surface
- ✓ Overhead projector
- ✓ AHS.8.TM.A
- ✓ AHS.8.TM.B
- ✓ AHS.8.TM.C
- ✓ AHS.8.TM.D
- ✓ AHS.8.AS.A
- ✓ AHS.8.AS.B—one per student
- ✓ AHS.8.Test—one per student
- ✓ AHS.8.Assess—one per student



Key Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson and appear in bold italics:

- ▶ Employability skills
- ▶ Resource competencies
- ▶ Interpersonal competencies
- ▶ Information competencies
- ▶ Systems competencies
- ▶ Technology competencies
- ▶ Basic skills
- ▶ Thinking skills
- ▶ Personal qualities



Interest Approach

This activity encourages students to broaden their horizons and look upon their current skills as opportunities, not as limitations.

Present the top half of the figure on AHS.8.TM.A to students, preferably by projection on a screen so all can see it at once. Ask students:



How many think that Circle A is larger than circle B?, and how many think Circle B is larger, is larger than circle A?



Demonstrate, through revealing the bottom half of the figure, that both circles are really the same size. For a laugh, ask how many think that box A is larger, and how many think that box B is larger. Now you'll really have them worried.

 In what ways do we let our minds work in similar fashion as we view our worlds?

What impact does this preconception-to focus on constraints, problems, and barriers-have on our own productivity? How can we prevent or diminish our tendency to limit our own thinking patterns like this? Does the apparent truism, "Where you stand depends on where you sit," necessarily hold equally true regarding your future employment-"What skills you have determines what job you will get"?

Us a Descartes Moment and ask students to compose a letter to themselves outlining the type of career they wish to pursue and what skills they believe to be valuable in that career path.

SUMMARY OF CONTENT AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1. Identify the competencies, skills, and personal qualities needed to succeed in today's workplace.

I. Competencies, skills, and personal qualities needed to succeed in today's workplace

Explain to the class:

 What skills do employers want? How do these skills match those that we are developing through our school, work, and FFA experiences? How can education and training programs prepare us to enter a rapidly changing workplace? These and other questions are examined in this unit that explores the employability skills currently needed for employment.

The term "employability skills" refers to those skills we are required to acquire in order to retain a job. In the past, employability skills were considered to be primarily of a vocational or job-specific nature-welding, typing, carpentry, etc. They were not thought to include the transferable skills most commonly taught in schools. Current thinking, however, has broadened the definition of employability skills to include not only many foundational academic skills, but also a variety of attitudes and habits.

In fact, in recent usage, the term "employability skills" is often used to describe the preparation or foundational skills upon which a person must build job-specific skills-i.e., those that are unique to specific jobs. Among these foundational skills are those that relate to oral and written communication; personal and interpersonal relationships; problem solving; critical and creative thinking; and management of organizational processes.



Employability skills in this sense are valued because they apply to many jobs and can support common preparation to meet the needs of many different occupations.

There are many definitions of the phrase "employability skills." The following updated definition is representative of a synthesis of definitions, as they have evolved over time:

Employability skills are transferable core skill groups that represent essential functional and enabling knowledge, skills, and attitudes required by the 21st century workplace. They are necessary for career success at all levels of employment and for all levels of education.

Because the world of work is changing, the U.S. Departments of Labor and Education formed the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills-SCANS-to study the kinds of competencies and skills that workers must have to succeed in today's workplace.

Hand out AHS.8.AS.A to students and say:



According to the SCANS report there are 5 competencies and 3 categories of skills and personal qualities needed to succeed in today's workplace:

Resource competencies:

- Identifies, organizes, plans, and allocates resources
- Time-selects goal-relevant activities, ranks them, allocates time, and prepares and follows schedules
- Money-uses or prepares budgets, makes forecasts, keeps records, and makes adjustments to meet objectives
- Material and facilities-acquires, stores, allocates, and uses materials or space efficiently
- Human resources-assesses skills and distributes work accordingly, evaluates performance, and provides feedback

Review this information by using a Choral Response Moment.

Interpersonal Competencies:

- Works with others
- Participates as member of a team-contributes to group effort
- Teaches others new skills
- Services clients or customers-works to satisfy customers' expectations
- Exercises leadership-communicates ideas to justify position, persuades and convinces others, responsibly challenges existing procedures and policies
- Negotiates-works toward agreements involving exchange of resources, resolves divergent interests
- Works with diversity-works well with men and women from diverse backgrounds

Review this information by using a Choral Response Moment



Information competencies:

- Acquires and evaluates information
- Acquires and evaluates information
- Organizes and maintains information
- Interprets and communicates information
- Uses computers to process information
- Review this information by using a Choral Response Moment.





Systems competencies:

- Understands complex interrelationships
- Understands systems-knows how social, organizational, and technological systems work and operates effectively with them
- Monitors and corrects performance-distinguishes trends, predicts impacts on system operations, diagnoses deviations in systems performance, and corrects malfunctions
- Improves or designs systems-suggests modifications to existing systems and develops new or alternative systems to improve performance

Review this information by using a Choral Response Moment.



Technology competencies:

- Works with a variety of technologies
- Selects technology-chooses procedures, tools, or equipment including computers and related technologies
- Applies technology to task-understands intent and proper procedures for setup and operation of equipment
- Maintains and troubleshoots equipment-prevents, identifies, or solves problems with equipment, including computers and other technologies

Review this information by using a Choral Response Moment.



Basic skills:

- Reads, writes, performs arithmetic and mathematical operations, listens, and speaks
- Reading-locates, understands, and interprets written information in prose and in documents such as manuals, graphs, and schedules
- Writing-communicates thoughts, ideas, information, and messages in writing, and creates documents such as letters, directions, manuals, reports, graphs, and flow charts
- Arithmetic or mathematics-performs basic computations and approaches practical problems by choosing appropriately from a variety of mathematical techniques
- Listening-receives, attends to, interprets, and responds to verbal messages and other cues
- Speaking-organizes ideas and communicates orally



Review this information by using a Choral Response Moment.



Thinking skills:

- Thinks creatively, makes decisions, solves problems, visualizes, knows how to learn, and reasons
- Creative thinking-generates new ideas
- Decision making-specifies goals and constraints, generates alternatives, considers risks, and evaluates and chooses best alternatives
- Problem solving-recognizes problems and devises and implements plan of action
- Visualizing-organizes and processes symbols
- Knowing how to learn-uses efficient learning techniques to acquire and apply new knowledge and skills
- Reasoning-discovers a rule or principle underlying the relationship between two or more objects and applies it when solving a problem

Review this information by using a Choral Response Moment.



Personal qualities:

- Responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, integrity, and honesty
- Responsibility-exerts a high level of effort and perseveres toward goal attainment
- Self-esteem-believes in own self-worth and maintains a positive view of self
- Sociability-demonstrates understanding, friendliness, adaptability, empathy, and politeness in group settings
- Self-management-assesses self accurately, sets personal goals, monitors progress, and exhibits self-control
- Integrity or honesty-chooses ethical courses of action

Review this information by using an A and Q Moment.

Objective 2. Develop a plan for advancing his or her competencies, skills, and personal qualities that employers seek.

II. Advancing competencies, skills, and personal qualities that employers seek

Introduce the topic of developing a plan for advancing your competencies, skills, and personal qualities that employers seek by saying:



We stop by a car dealership; we are looking for a new car.

We ask our travel agent for information on a trip of a lifetime.

We're out buying stereo equipment and want to get all the information we can on the latest models.



In all of these cases, a salesperson will make a presentation, telling us all about the features and benefits of the product or service. He or she will probably give us a brochure with lots of information and will answer any questions we have. Ultimately he or she wants to make sure the customer is satisfied and wants to make the sale!

Whatever your situation happens to be at this time-whether you are planning to go to college, thinking about joining the military or labor market eventually, or are already in the world of work and are looking for a better job-we will find ourselves in the position of the salesperson some day soon, but the product will be US, and WE will be selling ourselves to a potential employer! It shouldn't be that tough of a job. After all, we know the product better than anyone!

 Ultimately, we are going to have to answer the employer's question: Why should I hire you?

It is important for you to develop a strong presentation of our skills for potential employers or other appropriate audiences. Our skills presentation should demonstrate the following:

- Our knowledge
- Our skills
- Our attitudes
- Our experiences
- Our abilities
- Our interests
- Our values

Display AHS.8.TM.B.

 Skill vitality results from effective skill management and is imperative for creating and maintaining market place value.

Display AHS.8.TM.C.

 Skill planning is a four-phase process involving planning, assessment, development, and deployment.

Display AHS.8.TM.D.

 Creating maximum market place value means taking a proactive, systematic approach to skill management.
Hand out AHS.8.AS.B and have students take a short survey of their current competencies, skills and behaviors. Say:

 When we inventory our interests, abilities, aptitudes, and values, we may find that we are skilled in areas in which we never thought we would be qualified. By thoroughly assessing our skills, and having confidence in our abilities, knowledge, and skills, we may open up the doors to new opportunities. Take a few moments to assess our current level of the competencies, skills, and behaviors outlined by the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills.



Review this information using a Go-with-the-Flow Moment.

Review/Summary

Today, we looked at the skills we can gain that can be applied to any career. We viewed how we can become a more employable for future careers. Think about what skills we currently have that will help us in the future. Write a letter to yourself outlining what you will do to continue to build your employability skills.

Application

Extended Classroom Activity:

The Employability Skills Portfolio. Each portfolio consists of three folders: Academic Skills, Teamwork Skills, and Personal Management Skills, in which students compile information about their employability skills. Students will discover, develop and document their employability skills and share their successes, their strengths, and their interests with the instructor.

Have students shadow a working professional in the career that they wish to pursue.

FFA Activity:

Have students assess their current involvement in the FFA activities to 1) identify skills being developed, and 2) identify other activities that may help develop their skills.

SAE Activity:

Have students assess the skills being developed from their SAE project.

Evaluation

AHS.8.Test

Answers to Test:

1. a.
2. b.
3. c.
4. d.
5. e.
6. f.
7. g.
8. h.



SKILL DEVELOPMENT: EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS FOR THE 21

STCENTURY

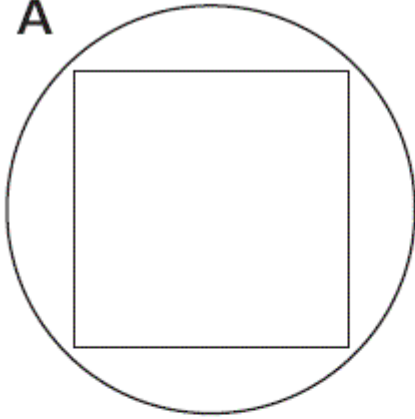
Connect the Employability skill with its definition

- a. Resource competenciese. Technology competencies
- b. Interpersonal competencies f. Basic skills
- c. Information competenciesg. Thinking skills
- d. Systems competenciesh. Personal qualities

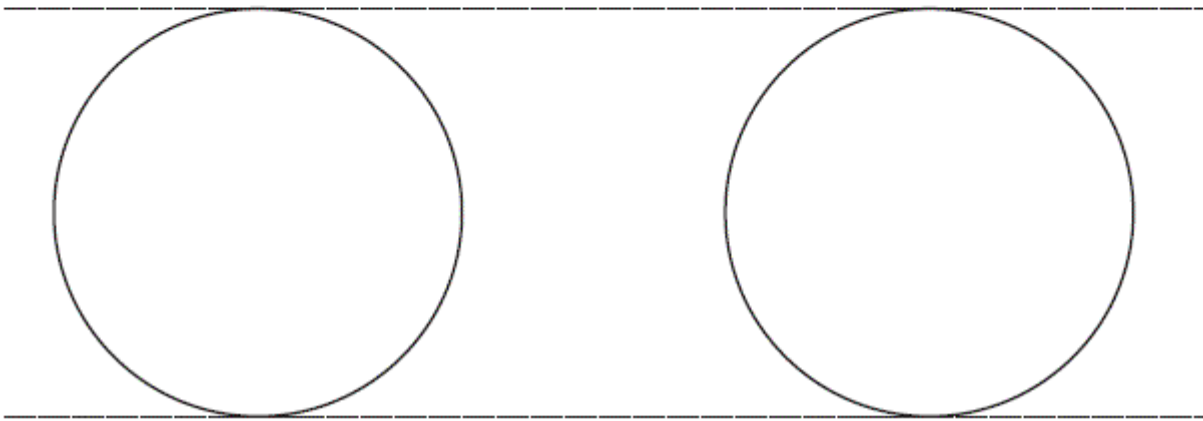
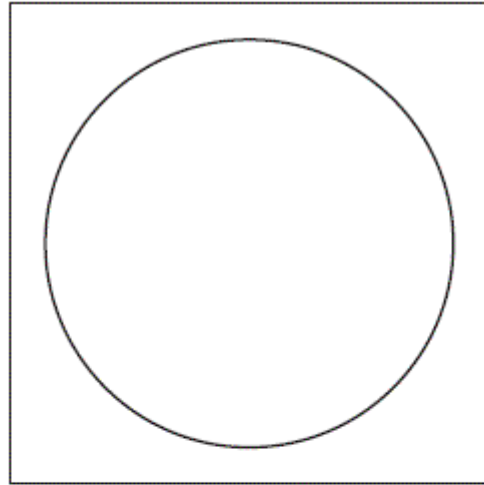
- _____ 1. Identifies, organizes, plans, and allocates resources
- _____ 2. Works with others
- _____ 3. Acquires and evaluates information
- _____ 4. Understands complex interrelationships
- _____ 5. Works with a variety of technologies
- _____ 6. Reads, writes, performs arithmetic and mathematical operations, listens, and speaks
- _____ 7. Thinks creatively, makes decisions, solves problems, visualizes, knows how to learn, and reasons
- _____ 8. Responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, integrity, and honesty

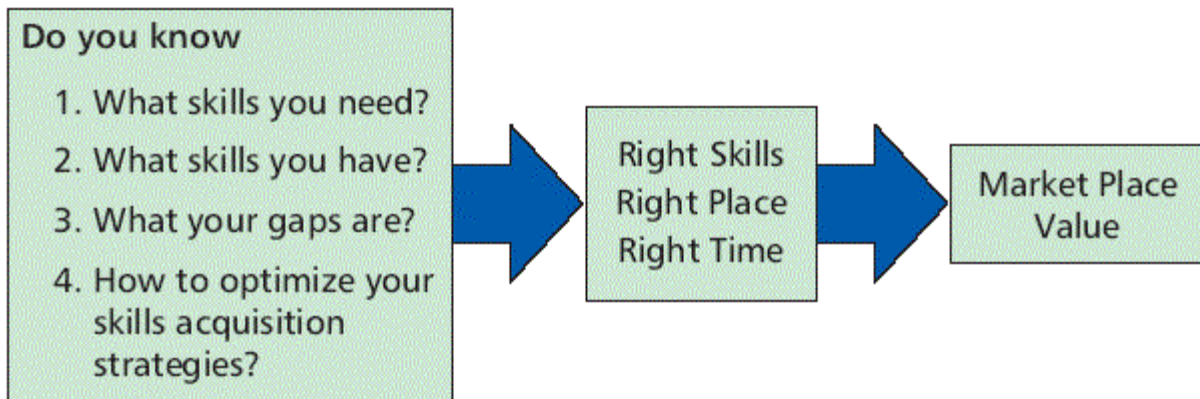


A



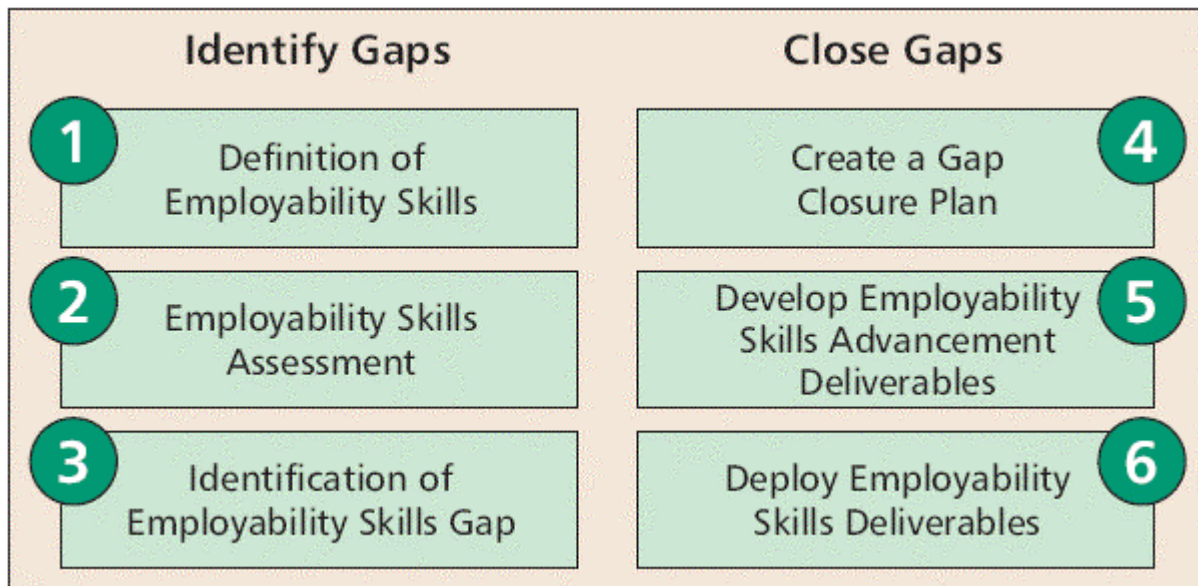
B





AHS.8.TM.C





SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES NEEDED TO SUCCEED IN TODAY'S WORKPLACE

Resource competencies—Identifies, organizes, plans, and allocates resources

- Time—selects goal-relevant activities, ranks them, allocates time, and prepares and follows schedules
- Money—uses or prepares budgets, makes forecasts, keeps records, and makes adjustments to meet objectives
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- Human resources—assesses skills and distributes work accordingly, evaluates performance, and provides feedback

Interpersonal competencies—Works with others

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Personal Qualities—Responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, integrity, and honesty

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- Self-esteem—believes in own self-worth and maintains a positive view of self
- Sociability—demonstrates understanding, friendliness, adaptability, empathy, and politeness in group settings
- Self-management—assesses self accurately, sets personal goals, monitors progress, and exhibits self-control
- Integrity/honesty—chooses ethical courses of action



EMPLOYABILITY SKILL ASSESSMENT

On this very basic list of skills, check each one you’ve used at any point in your life—you don’t have to be expert—and those you could use if asked. Be sure to complete the last part of this exercise as well. It will help you develop an employability skills plan to close the gap in your current skills and achieve the desired employability skills you need to succeed in today’s workplace.

Skill	Yes	No	Plan for Improvement	Timeline
Interpersonal				
Relate well with people				
Effective listener				
Sympathetic				
Sensitive to others				
Responsive				
Concerned				
Help others				
Accepting				
Team player				
Motivational				
Motivating individuals & groups				
Raise funds				
Persuasive				
Team-building				
Selling (things and ideas)				
Settle disputes				
Encouraging				
Promoting				



Skill	Yes	No	Plan for Improvement	Timeline
Verbal/Written Communication				
Express ideas				
Clear communicator				
Imaginative				
Speaks				
Writes				
Curious				
Articulate				
Defining				
Editing & condensing				
Translating				
Physical				
Strength				
Endurance				
Coordination				
Quickness & agility				
Love of outdoor activities				
Athletic				
Teaching & Counseling				
Explain				
Advise				
Inspire				
Listen				
Demonstrate				
Train				
Learn				
Analyze				
Notice				
Active listener				
Synthesize				
Good memory				
Reading, writing and computing				
Questioning and evaluating				



Skill	Yes	No	Plan for Improvement	Timeline
Detail & Completion				
Meet deadlines				
Persevering				
Organize				
Complete				
Implement				
Follow complex instructions				
Function despite stress				
Record keeping				
Numbers				
Counting and computing				
Using statistics				
Good money manager				
Accurate				
Accounting & bookkeeping				
Creating and using budgets				
Estimating and appraising				
Artistic				
Aesthetic awareness				
Creativity				
Expressive				
Good spatial sense				
Imaginative				
Make things				
Appreciating & creating beauty				
Visualizing abstract ideas				
Performing				
Designing web pages				



Skill	Yes	No	Plan for Improvement	Timeline
Hands-on				
Install				
Use tools				
Construct				
Prepare				
Handling				
Designing				
Producing				
Cooking				
Gardening				
Administrative				
Evaluating				
Setting & attaining goals				
Delegating				
Motivate others				
Set priorities				
Plan				
Follow-through				
Team-building				
Managing				
Creative & Visionary				
Intuitive				
Developing new ideas				
Judge effectively				
Original thinking				
Showing foresight				
Creative				
Innovative				
Experimental				
Imaginative				



Skill	Yes	No	Plan for Improvement	Timeline
Leadership				
Motivating others				
Self-starting				
Working without supervision				
Trying new things				
Act quickly in emergencies				
Run effective meetings				
Identify and solve problems				
Adapt to new situations				
Accept responsibility				
Make decisions				
Team building				
Presenting				
Public speaking				
Performing (singing, dancing, acting, playing instruments, etc.)				
Make presentations				
Appear before a group				
Help others enjoy themselves				
Contagious enthusiasm				
Analysis and Research				
Gathering information				
Synthesize				
Analyze				
Categorize				
Evaluate				
Make decisions				
Experiment				
Draw conclusions				
Examine				
Using computers				



Now Try This!

Once you've checked off the skills you've used or could use, choose another symbol—or highlighter—to mark the ones that you'd like to acquire in the future. Cross out those you'd rather not use again. Now look over your choices and their skill categories. Any patterns. Which three or four do you want to develop next. Of those you already have, which do you most want to use in your next experience. The combination of the new skills you'd like to develop and the old ones you'd most like to use again represents your “ideal” next job description!

