



HIGH SCHOOL

# Career Success Workbook

PART 3 OF 3:

ACT & REFLECT



Excellent  
Content



Activities



Real World  
Application



# Icon Key

## KEEP AN EYE OUT FOR THESE!

While you're reading, you will come across the following symbols and frequently-used acronyms:



### Thumbs-Up Icon

This icon indicates an activity for you to complete. When you see one, stop and look for instructions or action items.



### Exclamation Point Icon

All information detailed in this workbook is important, but this icon indicates a particularly vital section.

**CDMP:** Career Decision-Making Process

**CP:** Career Portfolio

**FAFSA:** Free Application for Federal Student Aid

**LMCI:** Labor Market & Career Information

**TWC:** Texas Workforce Commission



Published March 2023

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# **Step 5:**



# **Act**

# PURSUE AN EDUCATIONAL PLAN

Your next step is to take action. Determine your favorite careers and then rank your selected occupations according to your level of interest, your abilities, and how well they meet what you want in a career. Based on that ranking, you will create initial educational plans for the occupations.



## Rank Your Favorites

Let's get started. In your career portfolio, or on a blank sheet of paper, list 3 companies you would like to work for or 3 industries that interest you. Then list as many occupations you can think of which you find interesting and would be employed by that company or found in that industry. From these lists, find 5-10 occupation titles that interest you the most and write them down below. On the right of your list, write down a number to indicate their ranking to show which is most interesting to least interesting to you. You will use this list for the remainder of the activities in this workbook.

### Sample Industries

#### or Companies:

#### Sample Careers:

#### My Careers:

#### Rankings:

• Aerospace	• News Anchor	• _____	• _____
• Education	• Lawyer	• _____	• _____
• Entertainment	• Chef	• _____	• _____
• Food	• Teacher	• _____	• _____
• Health Care	• Editor	• _____	• _____
• Apple	• Landscaper	• _____	• _____
• Food Network	• Sportswriter	• _____	• _____
• Google	• Physician	• _____	• _____
• Netflix	• Meteorologist	• _____	• _____
• Sephora	• Physician's Assistant	• _____	• _____



## MY PLAN: JONATHAN

Rate this plan from 1 to 5 stars, with 1 star meaning it needs work and 5 stars as a success. Why did you give this rating?



"Hi, my name is Jonathan, and I love football. I want to be the next Tom Brady—he's won the most Super Bowls of any player! I can accomplish anything if I work hard, do well in school, and have a backup plan (just in case I suffer a career-ending injury during my historic football run). I decided in 8th grade to pursue the Business and Industry endorsement in high school. That way, I can major in Business in college while I'm quarterbacking at a D1 university. If I get injured, then I'll get an MBA and start a steel manufacturing business."

1  2  3  4  5

## Post-Secondary Education and Training

There are several different types of education or training to choose from after high school. Each has its own costs, advantages, and items to consider. Review the following pages to explore your options. Get a detailed explanation of the differences between these options and a step-by-step process to help you find the best fit in our publication called *Beyond High School* located on the "Products and Publications" page of our website at [LMCI.state.tx.us](http://LMCI.state.tx.us) under "Magazines."

For more information on all of these options, call the Career Information Hotline at 1-800-822-7526 or visit Texas Career Check at [www.TexasCareerCheck.com](http://www.TexasCareerCheck.com).

## FOUR-YEAR UNIVERSITY

Although it may take time to graduate, once you do, you can use your degree to apply for professional jobs. If you want to go to a four-year university, don't forget to take the SAT and/or ACT test, apply early to your chosen schools, and arrange to provide your high school transcript.

### WHAT IS IT?

Private and public universities and colleges provide you with a well-rounded education, which you can use to secure professional careers.

### WHAT YOU GET

A bachelor's degree in an area such as business, arts, science, engineering, or many more.

### CONSIDERATIONS

Depending on what you study, you could earn more money with a four-year degree. Even with financial aid, costs are high. Tends to have challenging admission requirements.

### COST

Annual tuition and fees at a public four-year university in Texas averages \$8,645.\*  
Private four-year universities in Texas average \$32,482.\*\*

**Note:** Tuition doesn't cover room and board, food, or books.

\*THECB Education Almanac, 2020    \*\*[NCES.ed.gov](https://nces.ed.gov), Table 330.20, 2020



## **TWO-YEAR COLLEGE**

It is important to note that with open admissions at most community colleges, there's little chance of being rejected from the school of your choice. Junior colleges, on the other hand, have more competitive admission requirements and can choose to accept or reject admission to potential students based on the strength of their applications.

### **WHAT IS IT?**

Community colleges and junior colleges. These institutions provide students with short-term certifications, certificate degrees, and associate degrees, or prepare students to transfer to a four-year college.

### **WHAT YOU GET**

An associate's degree, certificate degree, or technical program certificate in an area such as history, English, pharmacy, phlebotomy, or many more.

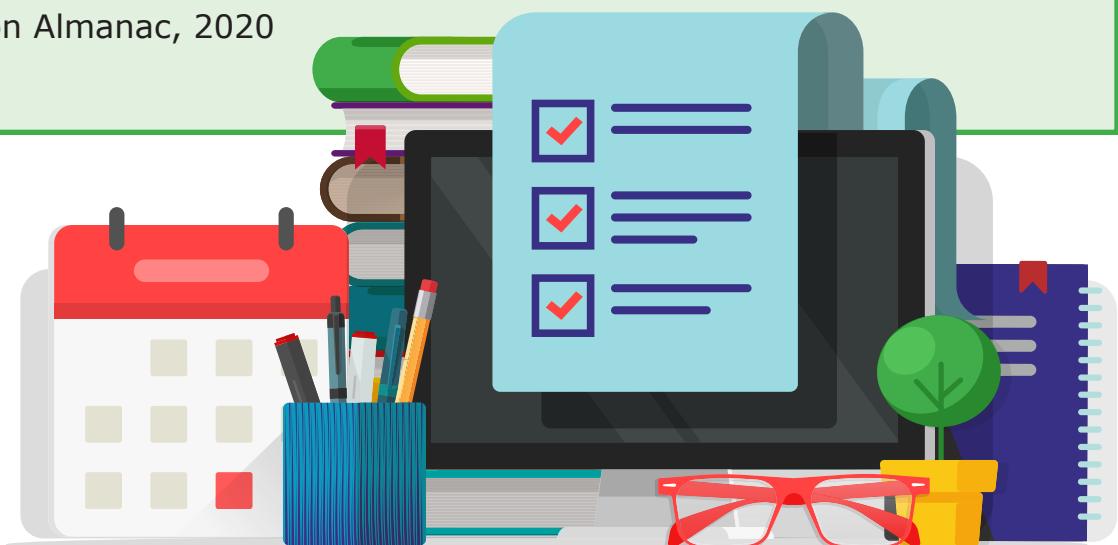
### **CONSIDERATIONS**

Usually an easy commute, so you can live at home to save money. Compared to a four-year university campus, there may be fewer social activities. Technical programs usually have good job placement.

### **COST**

Much less than a four-year university. In-state tuition for a public two-year college in Texas averages \$2,209 per year.\*

\*THECB Education Almanac, 2020



## CAREER COLLEGE OR TECHNICAL SCHOOL

If you are interested in a particular career or technical school, check it out with an accrediting agency before you register. The Texas Workforce Commission regulates career schools and colleges. To see which career schools are accredited in Texas, contact the Career Schools Department at 512-936-3100, the toll-free line 866-256-6333, or via email at [career.schools@twc.state.tx.us](mailto:career.schools@twc.state.tx.us).

### WHAT IS IT?

Specialized education designed to lead directly to employment. Programs vary from a few months to two+ years. Private career and technical schools are also referred to as “proprietary” or “for profit” institutions.

### WHAT YOU GET

Depending on the school, you can get a career-related education, technical skills, hands-on training, or a certificate that will enhance your chances of getting a job.

### CONSIDERATIONS

Get focused, sophisticated training. Technology changes quickly, so you must stay on top of your specialty. Check with employers in your field to see if a certificate/credential from your school would qualify you for a position.

### COST

Ranges from relatively affordable to very costly. Don’t forget to factor in the cost of equipment.



Texas State Technical College (TSTC) is the only public technical college district with accreditation in Texas. The TSTC district is comprised of several campuses across the state. Programs on each campus differ based on industry and employer demand in that region.

## **U.S. ARMED FORCES**

Consider the occupational specialty you choose within the U.S. Armed Forces carefully. Some specialties have civilian applications while others are better only for military careers. Discover transferable civilian and military skills at [TexasCareerCheck.com](http://TexasCareerCheck.com)! For more information, use the following resources:

- 800-USA-ARMY, [Army.com](http://Army.com)
- 800-423-USAFA, [AirForce.com](http://AirForce.com)
- 800-USA-NAVY, [Navy.com](http://Navy.com)
- 800-MARINES, [Marines.com](http://Marines.com)
- 800-GO-TO-ANG, [GoANG.com](http://GoANG.com)
- 800-638-7600, [NationalGuard.com](http://NationalGuard.com)
- [GoCoastGuard.com/about-us/find-recruiter](http://GoCoastGuard.com/about-us/find-recruiter)

### **WHAT IS IT?**

Enlistment in the U.S. Armed Forces: Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines, Coast Guard or National Guard.

### **WHAT YOU GET**

Career training, work experience and an opportunity to travel. There is also the G.I. Bill, which pays toward your higher education.

### **CONSIDERATIONS**

Receive skills training, paid room and board, and an appreciation for large-scale teamwork. Serve your country. Grow in maturity and professionalism. Employers like to see military service on a resume.

### **COST**

No cost, but there is a time commitment to serve. Years of service depends on the branch, with a minimum of two years. Check the commitment required for your branch of interest.

## APPRENTICESHIP

If you are interested in becoming an apprentice, be sure to explore the Registered Apprenticeship opportunities in your area by going to the apprenticeship finder tool on [Apprenticeship.gov](https://apprenticeship.gov). Only a registered apprenticeship program is guaranteed to provide all apprentices with both hands-on and classroom learning, provide a wage starting on the first day of the program, and culminate in an industry-recognized credential leading to a high-demand occupation in your area.

At several points throughout a program, apprentices are tested and/or experience performance reviews. The results of these can lead to job advancement.

### WHAT IS IT?

Programs that teach a trade while you train under an expert in the field. Registered apprenticeship training provides 80% hands-on training with a professional and 20% learning in a technical classroom.

### WHAT YOU GET

Real-world training and experience, as well as entry into difficult-to-break-into trades, such as cybersecurity, culinary arts, software development or electrical work.

### CONSIDERATIONS

Great way to learn a trade and earn credibility. Apprenticeship programs exist for over hundreds of occupations, according to the U.S. Department of Labor.

### COST

You may be paid a salary while apprenticeship. Pay will start relatively low, but will increase as you train.

## APPRENTICESHIPS: MYTHS AND FACTS

The following graphic illustrates common myths about apprentices and apprenticeship programs. Be sure to check out the excellent resources included to explore apprenticeship programs of interest to you.

### MYTH

**All apprentices are required to join a union**

Not so! In Texas no apprenticeship program can require you to join a union. Under Texas Labor Law, no employee can be required to pay union dues, including paid apprentices.

### FACT

### MYTH

**Apprenticeships are only for jobs in construction**

Find a list of apprenticeships at [Apprenticeship.gov](https://apprenticeship.gov). The list is long and varied. Some example apprenticeships include: administrative law judges, air traffic controllers and desktop publishers.

### FACT

### MYTH

**Apprentices work for free**

Apprentices registered with the U.S. Department of Labor (check [Apprenticeship.gov/apprenticeship-finder](https://apprenticeship.gov/apprenticeship-finder)) will, in fact, earn money while they get valuable hands-on experience and build their skills.

### FACT

### MYTH

**Apprentices don't get a well-rounded education**

At [Apprenticeship.gov/help](https://apprenticeship.gov/help) there are FAQs. Under "How is apprenticeship different...?" you see that apprenticeships "provide on-the-job learning" and "classroom training" along with mentorship.

### FACT

### MYTH

**Apprenticeships are an outdated practice**

Visit [Apprenticeship.gov](https://apprenticeship.gov) to see various current apprenticeships that prove this myth wrong!

### FACT

# Additional Options

## ENTRY-LEVEL JOBS

### WHAT IS IT?

A job at the lowest level of positions available that traditionally prepares workers for higher positions.

### WHAT YOU GET

Establish relationships with companies or networking with contacts while building practical skills.

### COST

Often these are stepping stones—employees contribute to the company or build skills before moving up to their ultimate career goals.

### CONSIDERATIONS

- Everyone starts here.
- If you change industries late in your career, you may have to start over again in an entry-level position.
- Because entry-level positions are career starting points, there is good opportunity for advancement and experience.

### FOR MORE INFO

- As you enter new positions, always consider what opportunities you have for professional growth.
- If a co-worker has the job you want someday, approach them about mentoring you. Let your manager know when you are ready for upward movement in your company.



## MINIMUM WAGE JOBS



### WHAT IS IT?

A job that pays the least amount per hour allowable under U.S. and state law.

### WHAT YOU GET

Tackling adulthood with limited financial stability.

### COST

As a career destination, the cost is your ability to live independently, since there is no way you will be able to live on your own while making minimum wage.

### CONSIDERATIONS

- At best, this will buy time to figure out what you want to do next.
- This income is below poverty level.
- It's tricky handling your money when you earn so little. Don't fall into the trap of spending more than you make.
- Use this as a path upwards. Always look for better opportunities!

### FOR MORE INFO

- Check help-wanted ads, employment and temp agencies, and with friends who've gone to work.
- See if there is a career path, management opportunity or college tuition assistance at your workplace.
- See your local Workforce Solutions offices for free assistance in finding and landing a better paying job.

## INTERNSHIPS



### WHAT IS IT?

A position working for a person or company usually in a supportive role, completing relatively simpler and less sensitive work, often full- or part-time. This is a great way to learn about a particular field or career of interest.

### WHAT YOU GET

Internships are commonly utilized to facilitate getting a full-time, salaried job from the same company for which the worker is interning. Important professional networking is also likely.

### COST

You typically earn little money or none at all as an intern depending on the type of internship. You may have to pay transportation and lodging costs.

### CONSIDERATIONS

- Internships provide valuable experience that looks excellent to potential employers, very often leading to opportunities either related to the same work or through connections you've made.
- You will likely meet co-workers who will be good professional connections later in your career.

### FOR MORE INFO

You can find internship information at the TWC Internship Challenge website, [TXInternshipChallenge.com](http://TXInternshipChallenge.com).

## VOLUNTEERING



### WHAT IS IT?

Working for a person or an organization to help others, support the community, or check out a career field. Volunteers will most often complete a service or services. The work can be regular, but it is not necessarily part-time work in the typical sense of the term.

### WHAT YOU GET

The fulfillment of knowing that you're helping others or the community. You can also build a network of professional contacts to whom you can reach out for support or references when it's time to apply for paid positions.

### COST

Volunteers work without pay.

### CONSIDERATIONS

- You get the chance to do some good, gain valuable experience that looks great to employers, and open up new opportunities related to your volunteer work or connections you've made.
- You may gain perspective on what you want to contribute to the world.

### FOR MORE INFO

Go to [VolunteerMatch.org](http://VolunteerMatch.org) and enter your zip code and your interest area (disaster relief, journalism, etc.). You will be provided with a list of volunteer opportunities in your area.

## Are You the First to Go?

Are you the first in your family to go to college? Or to enlist in the military or become an apprentice? Selecting a career or training that no one in your family is familiar with will require you to take charge and make a plan. You'll need help navigating the application process, searching for financial aid and dealing with life once you enter your program.



- 01.** Get your parents involved. The better your parents understand what you're experiencing, the more able they'll be to give you support. If you're going to some form of postsecondary education, then you'll benefit from a basic understanding of the costs involved and options for meeting those costs.
- 02.** There are a couple of other good publications to help you on this journey. One is *Financial Aid*, a short brochure about financial aid that you can consider if you're pursuing higher education. Another is *Beyond High School*, a booklet about your options for education and training after you graduate high school. It includes a chapter on costs. You can find both and many other publications at [bit.ly/lmcipubs](http://bit.ly/lmcipubs).
- 03.** Research online. Whatever you're planning to do—college, military, apprenticeship, etc.—use your online resources like LinkedIn, Google, YouTube, and the like to gain information and see what you can find out. Become as conversant as you can in concepts and terms related to your path of interest so you can walk into your counselors' offices with questions ready. In high school, know your counselors. During high school, your counselor can help with the process of selecting a post-high school program.
- 04.** Once you start, get to know the people in your program. Family members who have gone before you can provide you with shared experience to warn you about pitfalls. If you don't have that because you're the first to go to college, enlist in the military or begin an apprenticeship, then you can rely on the shared experience of new friends and classmates.



## MY PLAN: CESAR

Rate this plan from 1 to 5 stars, with 1 star meaning it needs work and 5 stars as a success. Why did you give this rating?



"Hi, my name is Cesar, and my plan is to go to Dallas Community College (DCC). I chose a two-year school because I'm the first in my family to go to college. I want to take my basics and get an Associate's degree in emergency medical services. I spoke with my high school counselor and the DCC counselor, and they told me that after I graduate, I could either try to get a job or transfer to a four-year school. Since I will be the first in my family to attend college, I can still get the education I want while making sure I can succeed."

1  2  3  4  5

## Picking Your Post-High School Plan

After you know what career path you want and what education or training is required, you need to choose how and where you'll acquire the necessary education (school, college or military branch). Here are some of the things you will want to consider.

### 01. Rank the Programs

You will want to rank your different education and training options. Find out how related the various curriculums will be to the career field you will pursue after you complete your studies. Is one program better suited to

your career of choice than others? Do any of the programs help you secure a job after training?

## 02.

### **Challenge Yourself**

Consider how rigorously the particular institutions and programs challenge the students and trainees and recruits to become better and more competent professionals and people. Strong programs will probably have steep admissions requirements. A private college or university, for example, may have a strong program in the major you want. However, such a school may also require more for admissions than simply a high school diploma. It may require personal references, essays or interviews.

## 03.

### **Entrance Requirements**

Entrance Requirements and application submission timelines for all Texas Colleges and Universities, and most other Universities nationwide, is available at [TexasCareerCheck.com](http://TexasCareerCheck.com) and websites like it. College websites offer even more detailed information.

## 04.

### **Admissions Requirements**

What kind of GPA do you need to get into the program? What kind of scores do you need on the SAT or ACT? What are the admissions deadlines? Find out specific admissions requirements and compare those requirements to your qualifications. Unless you find that you have missed a concrete, non-negotiable deadline, go ahead and give the application your best effort—especially for an institution and a program you really want to get into. Even if you think there's no chance, you never know what could happen. You only know for sure you won't get in if you don't apply.

## 05.

### **Cost**

Cost is a big deal, but lots of options exist for financing your education after high school. Before you give up on any program because you think you can't afford it, consider all the alternatives. More on how to pay for your education is provided in the following pages.

# Picking Your Post-High School Plan, Continued

## 06. Location

Attending a school far from home costs more. It may feel great to move away and “be on your own” after you graduate from high school, but there is a price to pay: it’s likely that once you’re paying to live away from home, you won’t live as comfortably as you do at your family’s house.

## 07. Social Life

Social life and activities with your fellow students, apprentices or trainees are important, but they also can be a distraction. Letting yourself become distracted could derail your plans, costing you much more money if you have to retake classes or restart with a new program. Social connections can strengthen you mentally and make you happier, helping you stick around and complete your studies. In addition, the friendships you make can last many years after completing your training, education, or military service. Just don’t overdo it. It can cut into your studies, hurt your performance, and adversely impact your job prospects.

## 08. High School Friends

Follow your friends on Instagram, TikTok or Snapchat, not to their colleges, branch of the military, apprenticeship or vocational training. You may have gone to school with a close group of friends since kindergarten, but you and your friends may choose different educational or training paths because you want to achieve different things in your adult lives. There is nothing wrong with that. Follow your own career path and your own dreams.





## **LIST AND RANK YOUR EDUCATION OPTIONS**

***“Nothing in the world is worth having or worth doing unless it means effort...”***

*–Theodore Roosevelt*



# UNDERSTANDING FINANCIAL AID

If you are planning to someday attend a two-year or a four-year college, unless you plan to serve in the military, you will need to make sure you can come up with the money to pay for your education.



Maybe you are not planning to apply for financial aid because you think one or more of the following:

- *"My parents make too much money for me to get help paying for school."*
- *"My grades aren't good enough to get financial aid."*
- *"I'll never be selected for a scholarship."*

Many students choose not to apply for financial aid for these and other reasons, because they don't understand how it works.



Here's a crash course that will hopefully help address some of your doubts.

## PAYING FOR YOUR EDUCATION

If you are planning to someday attend a two- or four-year college, unless you plan to serve in the military, you will need to come up with the money to pay for your education. This money can come from any number of places. Here are just a few examples:

- Once you turn 16, you can hunt for a part-time, after-school or summer job and start saving up.
- Your parents/guardians may be able to help (but don't assume this).
- Financial aid can offset the cost of an education and/or training program. It comes in many shapes—grants, loans, scholarships and work-study programs—so ask about them all. It also comes from many different sources—the federal government, private organizations, businesses, foundations, and schools themselves.

- Tuition reimbursement from an employer—some, but not all, employers will offer employees the opportunity to apply for tuition reimbursement. There are usually grade requirements to collect the reimbursement. This includes military employment.

## **FILLING OUT YOUR FINANCIAL AID FORMS**

Before applying for financial aid, you must fill out a Free Application for Federal Student Aid, or FAFSA. In fact, all high school students in Texas must complete the FAFSA, TASFA, or an opt-out form to graduate. The FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid) is available to U.S. citizens, permanent residents, and some eligible non-citizens. The TASFA (Texas Application for State Financial Aid) is available for students in Texas who do not qualify for the FAFSA.

Both applications become available on October 1st of every year. Aid is awarded on a first-come, first-serve basis. If you are a dependent, be sure to involve a guardian—you will need one in order to fill out the application appropriately. You can find the FAFSA application at [FAFSA.ed.gov](https://fafsa.ed.gov). You can find the TASFA application at [www.bit.ly/GetTASFA](https://www.bit.ly/GetTASFA). You should complete A FAFSA or TASFA when you start applying to higher education institutions, and re-apply each year that you are enrolled in your institution—this will maximize your chances to receive, or continue receiving, financial aid. Some institutions award aid on a first-come, first-serve basis, so applying early may secure you more funds. You will want to submit your application as soon as possible each year, after it becomes available on October 1.

## **FINANCIAL NEED**

Once you complete the FAFSA, you will receive an EFC score. EFC stands for Expected Family Contribution. The EFC score is a number that helps schools determine how much money you and your family can contribute to cover college expenses.

TASFA students will not receive an EFC score after completing their application. However, your institution will calculate its own version of an EFC score and use that to determine financial need. A school's Cost of Attendance minus your Expected Family Contribution equals your Financial Need. Your financial need determines how much and what type of financial aid is offered to you. Remember the formula: COA-EFC= Financial Need.

## DIFFERENT KINDS OF FINANCIAL AID

Some of the various types of financial aid available are:

- **Grants and scholarships.** These are both types of financial aid provided by state, federal, private, school or corporate entities. Neither grants nor scholarships are paid back to investors unless a student were to accept the funds, but later drop out of college. Applicants usually must prove financial need to earn grants. That said, both merit- and need-based scholarships are available for applicants.
- **Merit-based financial aid.** This is given to students who have performed a specific task, maintained a certain GPA, or who possess specific talents. These are often provided as scholarships.
- **Need-based financial aid.** This is provided to students whose FAFSAs show expected annual educational expenses and what they and their families can fund on their own. Grants, scholarships, loans, and work-study jobs are examples of financial aid awarded based on need.
- **Student loans.** These are funds provided to students which must be paid back in full. Payments must usually begin six months after a student graduates or leaves higher education.
- **Work-study jobs.** These are federally-funded work programs on college campuses that are available to students whose FAFSA proves they need financial assistance. Students must be enrolled at least part-time and work on the campus where they attend classes. Apply early and often!





## WHEN IN DOUBT, APPLY

If you think you won't have a chance at getting financial aid for school, remember that it comes in many different forms and is available to many different kinds of people in various circumstances. You have nothing to lose by applying and seeing what happens.

## NEED TO LEARN ABOUT MANAGING MONEY?

To prepare to pay for your education and life after high school, you have to know how to manage money. There are lots of resources to help you learn. Check out the Federal Reserve Bank of Dallas' Building Wealth program at [bit.ly/StudentWealthB](http://bit.ly/StudentWealthB). This site can help you learn about setting financial goals, budgeting, saving, investing, and more!



## Places to Look for Money

Remember that you don't have to pay scholarships or grants back, so you'll probably want to search online and apply for this type of financial aid first. A good place to start is with the Texas Higher Education Coordinating Board, by visiting [CollegeForAllTexans.com](http://CollegeForAllTexans.com). Here are a few other places you can find scholarship or grant opportunities, or programs that exist to help you earn free college credits:

- **Advanced Placement, Dual Credit Programs, Early College High School.**  
The more college credits you get in high school, the fewer you'll pay for later! Make sure you speak not only to your high school counselor, but to a college counselor to ensure these credits transfer to your school of choice.
- **School Financial Aid Officer.** This person controls about 90% of all student financial aid available. Contact the Financial Aid Office of the college, university, or career college you wish to attend about ten months prior to entrance.



## Places to Look for Money, Continued

- **Institutional Scholarships.** Various departments at a college (Art, English, History, Math, etc.) may offer scholarships to students enrolled in specific majors. Contact your major's department at your chosen college.
- **Special Programs/Grants.** Various colleges have special programs or awards for specific groups of students. Talk to your financial aid office to learn about what your school offers.
- **Community and National Organizations.** Many local organizations offer scholarships, grants, awards, loans, etc.; check with organizations such as your local religious bodies, community centers or Chambers of Commerce.
- **Business Firms/Unions/Ex-Military.** Businesses, especially large companies, have scholarships, grants, or awards for dependents of their employees (or sometimes, for anybody). Some unions and ex-military organizations offer the same.
- **Military.** Different programs exist such as the GI Bill which pays for your education after you complete your military enlistment period. The Army College Fund will help you pay off your student loans if you enlist or join the reserves after attending college. Loan repayment amount varies based on your service. Ask your recruiter for details on these or any other programs that may exist.
- **Educational Loans.** These loans are sometimes available at credit unions, commercial banks, savings and loan associations, etc., with a lower interest rate than personal loans. Go to [TGSCLC.org](http://TGSCLC.org) to learn about the Federal Family Education Loan Program.

### **GOING TO COLLEGE? YOU'LL PROBABLY NEED A JOB.**

If you're going to college, get ready. You have probably never experienced a more complete drain on your finances. College life is a large monetary commitment, and it can feel like your money is spent before you even earn it. You might want to jump on any chance you get to earn additional income. For many, that means getting a part-time job.

# FINDING A JOB

If you want to find a job, you must understand what it is that employers look for in applicants. Employers want motivated workers who will show up on time, have a positive attitude, work hard, work well with others, lead others, and do the best job they can.



## START YOUR SEARCH

You want to show an employer that you are a good investment for the current position and for any potential future positions. A good place to start looking for a job is to ask your relatives, neighbors, teachers, counselors and pretty much every adult you know. Many of these people have jobs and can help you through the process of networking and finding openings.

You can find a part-time or full-time job in a number of places, such as:

- Grocery stores
- On-campus jobs
- Small businesses
- Corporate offices
- Fast food and restaurants
- Stores at the mall
- Hotels and resorts
- Tourist attractions
- Golf and tennis clubs
- Local merchants
- Parks and recreation department
- Government summer job programs
- Summer camps

You can also find websites that specialize in helping people find part-time work, such as:

- [MyTxCareer.com](http://MyTxCareer.com)
- [Indeed.com/q-Groove-jobs.html](http://Indeed.com/q-Groove-jobs.html)
- [SnagAJob.com](http://SnagAJob.com)





## There's an Application for That

To be considered for a job, you will most likely have to fill out a job application. The application will ask you to provide your social security number, driver's license or state ID number, a list of personal references, emergency numbers, and information on your prior work experiences. Have this information ready when you apply.

For each item of experience you list on your application or resume, you should include the following information:

- Your employer and job title
- Month and year you started
- Month and year you finished
- Top five tasks you performed



The entry should be short and concise, like in this example:

**Bob's Burgers:** Burger Chef

*January 2016-August 2017*

Cooked burgers, cleaned station, assured food quality, trained new chefs, reported low inventory to management.

### 01. Pro-Tip

Once you decide to start looking for a job, be sure to create a professional email address, voice mail recording on your phone, and review your presence on social media. Employers will be more likely to consider interviewing you if your voicemail greeting and email are professional. Be sure to check your voicemail often to take advantage of these opportunities.

### 02. Personal References

Personal references are adult, non-relatives who know you personally.

Provide people like school teachers, coaches, scout leaders, neighbors, and volunteer coordinators. Call and ask permission to use them as references before listing their names. Be sure to get a phone number and email address from each.

### 03. Practice Application

If you fill out a hard copy application rather than an online one, get two copies. Fill out a practice application first, in pencil. This way you can mess up, erase or cross things out, make revisions and improvements etc. Make

it look good—the application may be the only thing a new employer sees before deciding whether to interview or hire you.

## 04.

### A Handy Tool

The Pocket Resume. If you fill out a Pocket Resume once and keep it in your wallet, you can refer back to it to fill out multiple applications later on. Never again forget critical phone numbers and other information when filling out a job application. It's a miniature resume that stores information commonly asked on a job application, like the above. You can download and print a copy at [bit.ly/lmcipubs](http://bit.ly/lmcipubs). Applying for your first job is exciting. Don't sweat it. It won't be your last!



### RESUME 101

As you begin to look for a job, you will also need a resume. Your resume is a summary of your experiences in work, volunteering, internships and school. Start by thinking about what the employer is looking for in an employee. The employer is the customer. Your customer. What does your customer need? Someone who can remember and follow instructions and customer's orders? Lift and carry? Wipe down tables? Show up on time? Serve with a smile? Write down all of what your customer needs. Employers look at how well your resume matches their job requirements to determine if you'd be a good fit. So it's important to make your resume a good representation of yourself and a good match for the job posting. Upon submission, your resume should be truthful and tailored to each different job to which you apply. The content of your resume will be determined by your own unique experiences, skills and background.

## RESUME 101, CONTINUED

You may feel a little overwhelmed at the prospect of writing a resume because you're not sure where to start. Many students worry they may not have enough experience to create a resume. The truth is that writing a resume is simple.

- Use search engines online to find different examples of what good resumes can look like.
- Talk to a guidance counselor to see if they have a template.
- There are even resume builder apps for smartphones if you have one.
- Once you have completed your resume, have your English teacher look over it.

### Interview Preparation

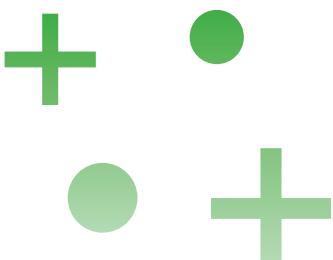
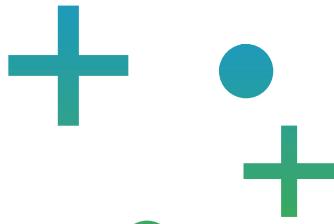
After you create your resume and fill out an application, the next step is to prepare for the interview. Start doing this way before you actually have one scheduled. Sometimes, when filling out an application you might be asked to interview on the spot, or you may be asked to come in the next day. To ace the interview, you'll need to be prepared.

Pick out a set of clothes that is neat and tidy. Avoid shorts; flip-flops; tank tops; crop tops; and anything especially low cut, short, or ill fitting. A good choice would be khaki pants, a polo shirt or simple blouse, and moderate shoes, or a business suit if it is a corporate job. Keep your set of clothes clean and ready.

Once you reach your interview location, remember to do the following:

- Be well mannered when you arrive.
- Give an appropriate greeting. Shake your interviewer's hand.
- Wait to sit until you are invited to.
- Don't slouch in your chair.
- Always speak clearly.

Be polite, positive, and professional throughout the interview, then sincerely say, "Thank you for this opportunity," when the interview is complete. Read ahead for some more tips on how to ace the interview, along with some pitfalls to avoid in order to ensure you make the right impression.



## PRACTICE INTERVIEWING:

### Ace the Interview:

- Research some standard interview questions
- Practice how you would respond to them
- Ask for help from a friend or family member

### Things to Avoid:

- Sounding nervous or rehearsed
- Not considering questions you might be asked

## KNOW YOUR SCHEDULE:

### Ace the interview:

Make sure your schedule can handle the job's demands:

- Consider obligations you already have...
  - + School
  - + Extracurricular activities
  - + Time needed for homework and household chores
  - + Etc.
- Then, add the time it will take for you to...
  - + Commute between home, work, and school
  - + Complete each work shift

### Things to Avoid:

- Overextending yourself
- Committing to a schedule that is unrealistic

## BE ON TIME:

### Ace the Interview:

- Arrive for any job interview a few minutes early
- Put the address into a maps app or write down directions
- Know ahead of time how long it takes to get there
- Make sure you have transportation

### Things to Avoid:

- Showing up late
- Rushing through an interview to catch the bus on time



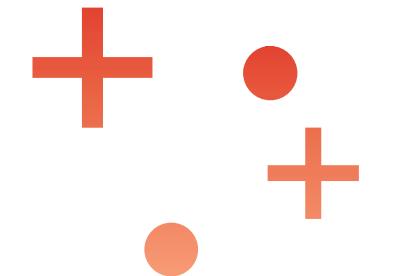
## BE PREPARED:

### Ace the Interview:

- Learn about the company on their website
- Study the job posting so you know how your skills, interests, and talents align to the position

### Things to Avoid:

- Showing up without researching and being mentally prepared



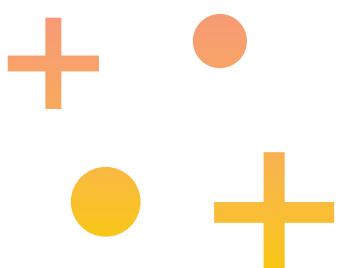
## BE PROFESSIONAL

### Ace the Interview:

- Put your cell phone on silent
- Smile and maintain eye contact while you shake your interviewer's hand
- Maintain eye contact as you answer questions
- Speak clearly and professionally
- Be polite, positive, and friendly throughout the interview
- Thank the interviewer for their time when you are done

### Things to Avoid:

- Chewing gum
- Smoking just before your interview
- Slouching in your seat during the interview
- Wearing too much cologne or perfume
- Using slang or curse words
- Being too relaxed



## GO ON YOUR OWN:

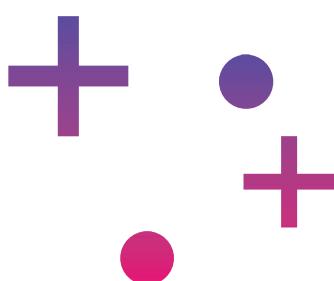
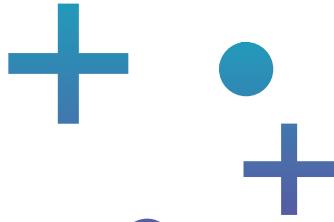
### Ace the Interview:

- Arrive at the interview alone
- If someone else happens to drive you, make sure you enter the interview room on your own

### Things to Avoid:

- Bringing someone else with you into the interview





- Allowing anyone else to speak to the interviewer (such as a parent) on your behalf

### **ASK QUESTIONS:**

Every interview is as much an opportunity for you to interview the company as it is for them to interview you. In most cases, you will be given an opportunity to ask questions of your interviewers at the end. Ask questions that are important to you. This shows that you studied the company beforehand and are genuinely interested in working for them.

#### Ace the Interview:

##### Good Questions to Ask:

- What are the two most important expectations you have for someone in this role?
- What are your long-term goals for the company?
- Describe your ideal employee.
- How do you measure and review performance for this role?
- What does a typical day or week on this job look like?
- What is the company culture here?
- How long have you worked here?
- When will you make your decision?

##### Things to Avoid:

Do not ask questions about the following, unless this information is critical to you accepting the job:

- Taking time off from work
- Pay raises
- Benefits provided
- Flexing your work schedule

## You Got the Job!

If you get a call from the employers saying they want to offer you the job, that's awesome. Happy dance time...almost. There's still some paperwork you will need to fill out. Specifically, your employer will need to see a couple of things from you to complete your I-9 Employment Eligibility Verification paperwork:

- **Social Security Card.** Make sure you bring yours with you on your first day. If you don't have a social security card, an original birth certificate or passport will do. It could take up to 4-6 weeks to get a replacement birth certificate, and a new social security card typically takes 2-4 weeks. Apply for a new/duplicate card online at [ssa.gov/online/ss-5.html](http://ssa.gov/online/ss-5.html).
- **Driver's License or State ID card.** Employers will ask for a copy of a current driver license. If you don't drive, get a state identification card, also available at any Texas Department of Public Safety office.



## BE A TEAM PLAYER

Have you participated on a team or in a club in high school? Maybe sports, student government or drama club? If so, then you have something to add to your resume and also what all employers are looking for—someone who can fulfill a specific role as part of a larger team to achieve a shared goal. When you have a job, you work on a team to produce a product or service that the company sells. Teamwork means you can have open, productive relationships with other workers. Using teamwork to tackle a problem, create a new product, or simply make the organization more productive allows the group to make the most of everyone's talents.

## SOFT SKILLS

Though you may be most familiar with the phrase soft skills, in the world of work, higher education, and life adults refer to this same set of skills by many other names. Specifically, they are often called employability skills, workplace skills, life skills, marketable skills, interpersonal skills, and professional skills, among many other titles.

No matter what they are called, know that all of these terms refer to the exact same skills you know as soft skills. Here are some of the soft skills you need to have to be a good team player:

- **Communication.** State your ideas or questions clearly, listen to others attentively, and resolve disagreements cordially.
- **Flexibility.** When a project doesn't go as planned, you need to be flexible and alter your strategies to roll with unforeseen circumstances.
- **Compromise.** It's important to listen to everyone on the team and accept many different viewpoints.
- **Accountability.** If you make a mistake, acknowledge it. That means not shifting the blame onto others or making excuses for failure.
- **Organization.** Be sure someone (if not you) is tracking everyone's progress, so the team will complete all of its tasks on time.

To learn more about additional soft skills and how each is critical for your success in the workplace, go to the U.S. Department of Labor's "Skills to Pay the Bills" online tool at [bit.ly/SkillsToGetHired](http://bit.ly/SkillsToGetHired).

## Do You Have a Backup Plan?

At the beginning of Step 5, you were asked to list and rank your ten favorite careers. Although you will want to concentrate on your top-ranked careers, you should also keep the rest of the list around in case something unforeseen prevents you from being able to pursue your number one choice.

This is where having a backup plan will help you out. You can simply look at your list and choose the second career listed; or even another career within the same career cluster. Maybe your second choice is to become a sportscaster. Instead of playing on the field you will be reporting what is happening on the field. Everyone needs a backup plan, not just athletes. It will be especially necessary if you select a high-profile career such as professional athlete, actor, fashion designer, singer and model. Some careers that sound highly desirable don't have many jobs available. Having a backup plan is absolutely recommended, not for these careers only, but all careers. It doesn't mean giving up on your dreams. It just makes good sense.

## THE KEY TO A BACKUP PLAN: TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

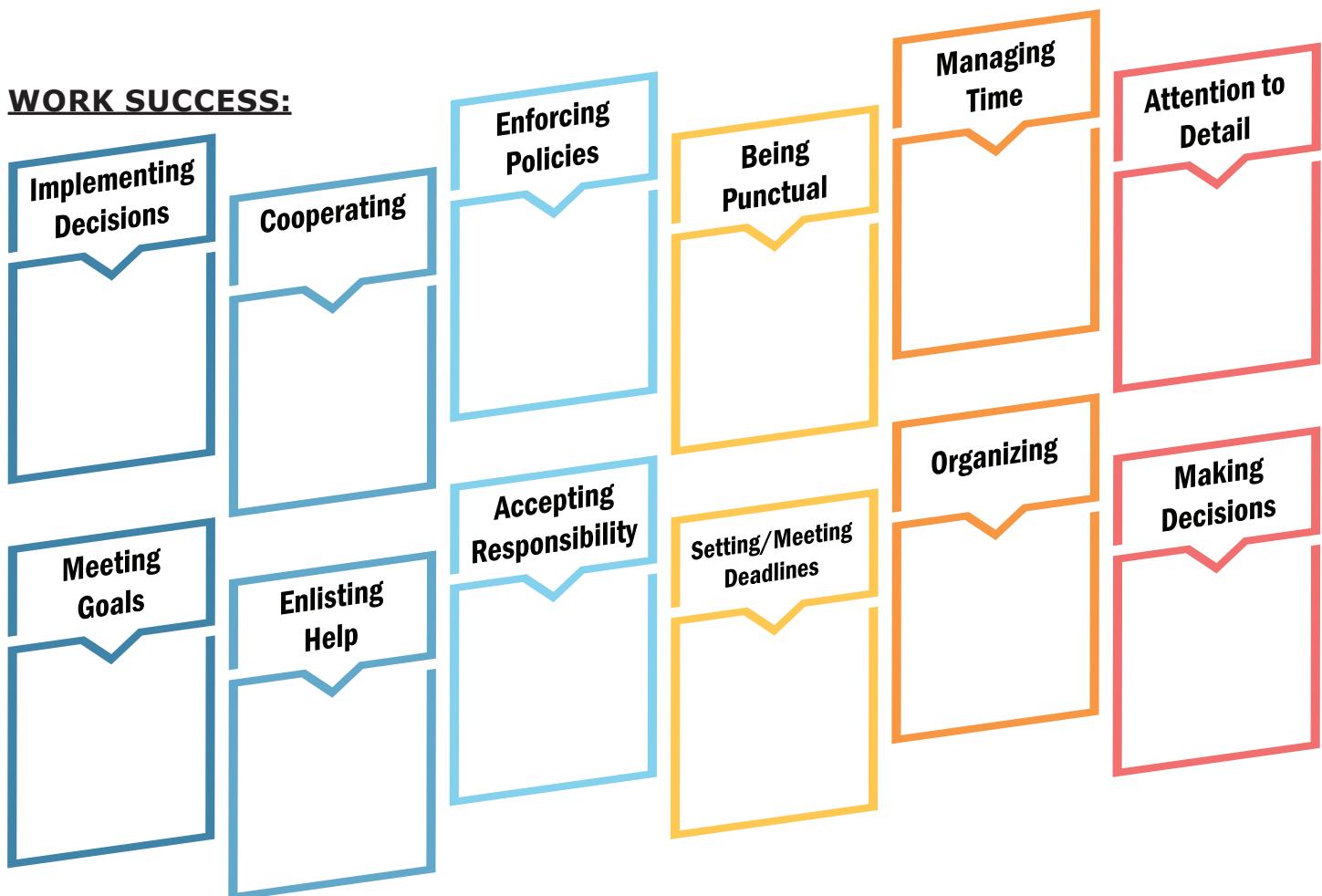
Choosing a career to pursue now does not lock you into one path for the rest of your life. You can always transfer your skills and select a different career direction in the coming years. Transferable skills are the skills you acquire through school, various jobs, volunteer work, hobbies, sports, or other life experiences that can be used in your next job or new career. In the next activity, you will find a list of transferable skills. As you'll see, you have already used many of these skills throughout your years in school, preparing you for your professional life.



### IDENTIFY YOUR TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Next to each of the skills listed on the following pages, write down a brief example of an instance in your life when you used that skill. Include the year you did so. When the time comes to build a resume, this information can prove useful.

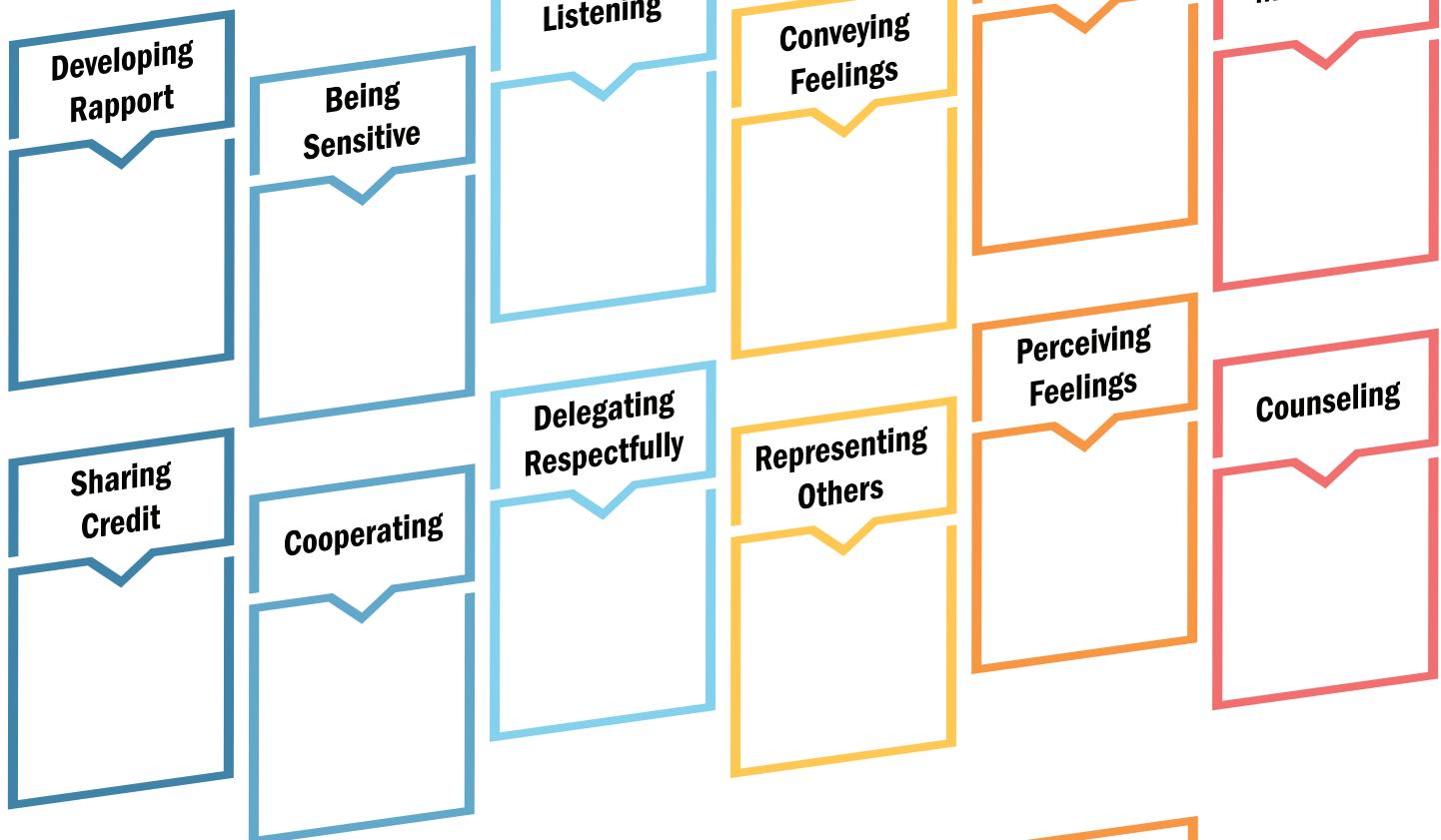
#### WORK SUCCESS:





## IDENTIFY YOUR TRANSFERABLE SKILLS, CONTINUED

### HUMAN RELATIONS



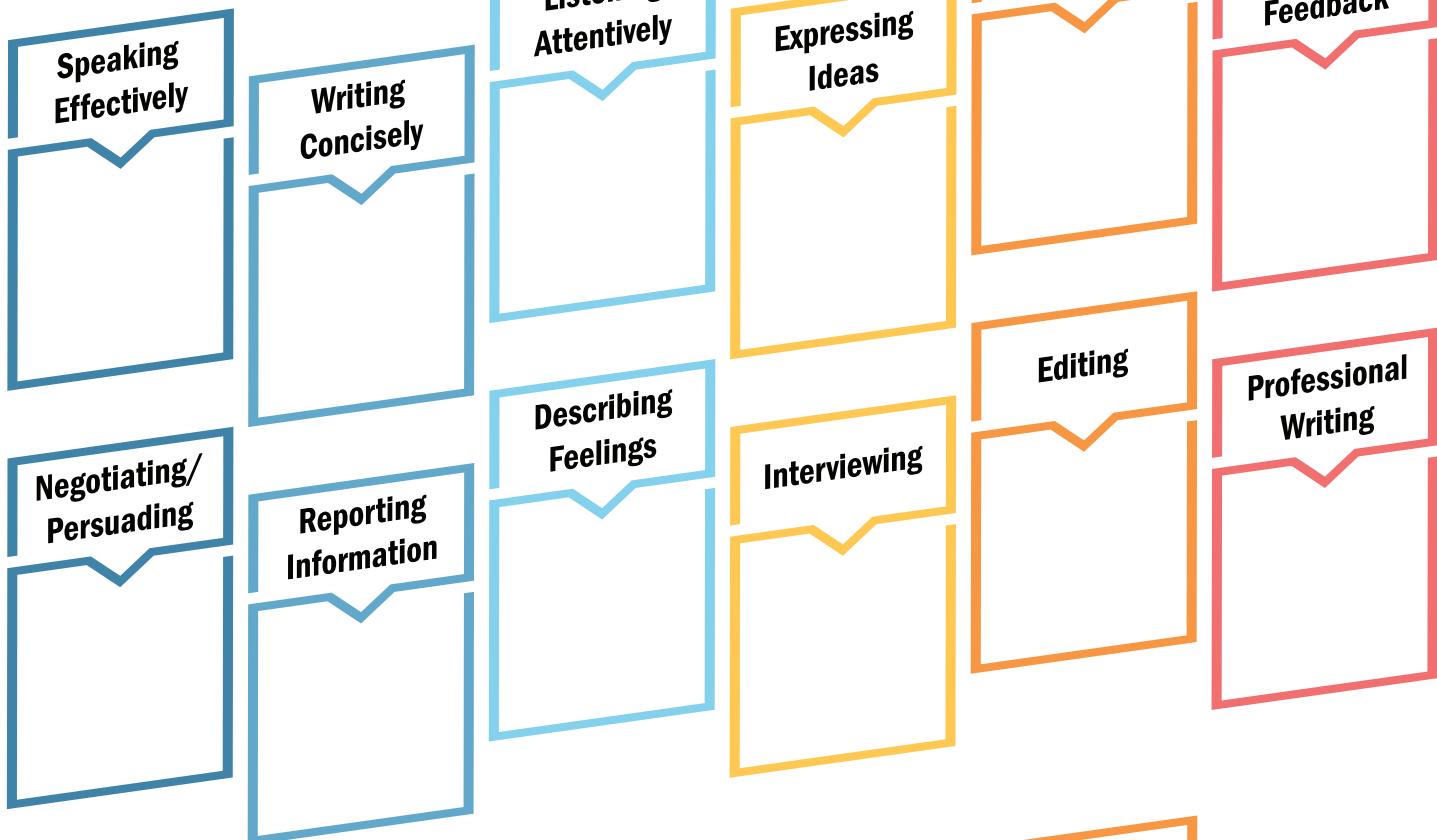
### ORGANIZING & LEADING



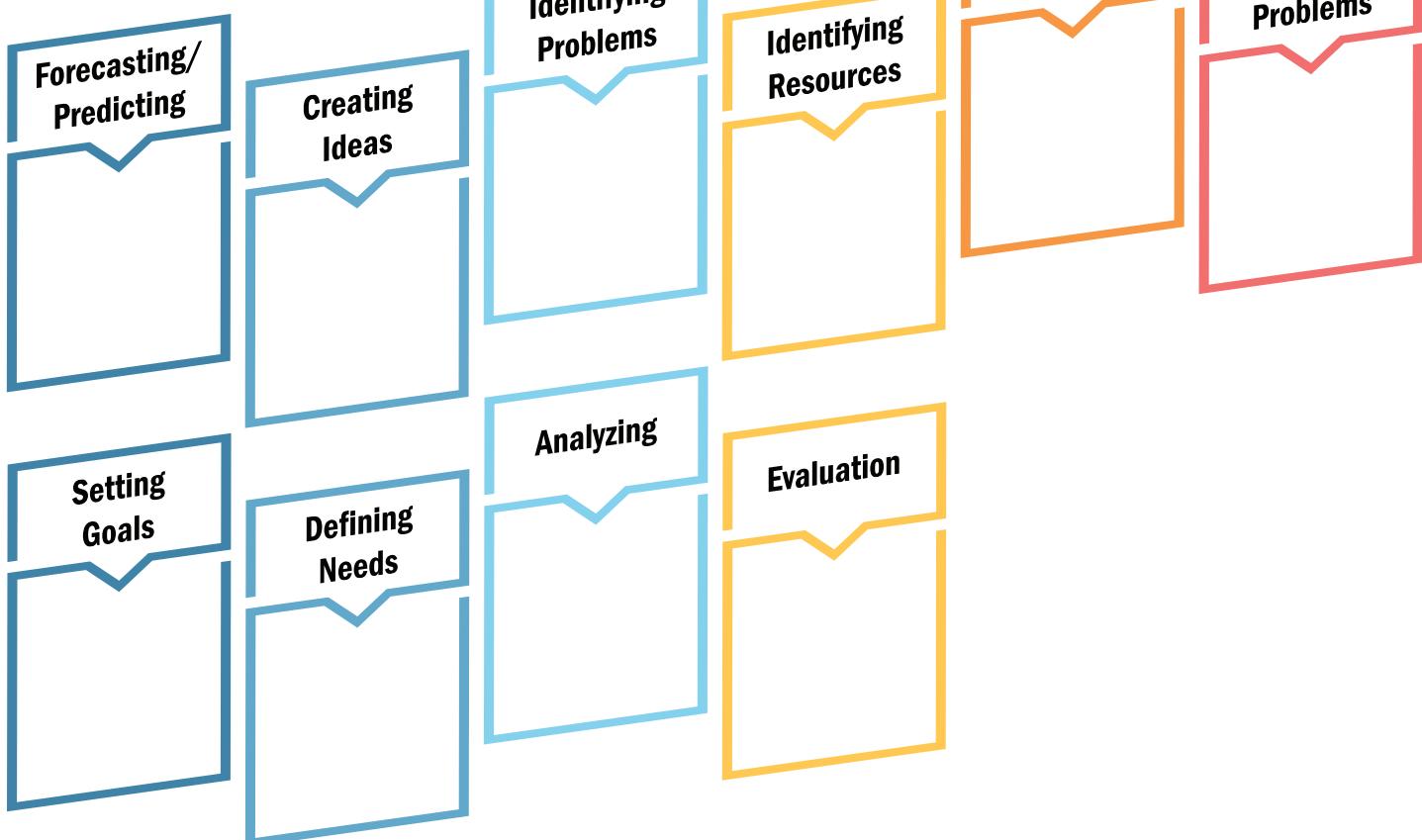


## IDENTIFY YOUR TRANSFERABLE SKILLS, CONTINUED

### COMMUNICATION:



### RESEARCH & PLANNING:



# Step 6:



# Reflect

# SO, WHAT'S YOUR PLAN?

You have gone through the first five steps of the CDMP. Now, it's time for Step 6: Reflect. In this step, you will make a final review of the occupational choices and the post-high school plans you have made. Are you satisfied with your career direction?



## REVISIT YOUR OPTIONS

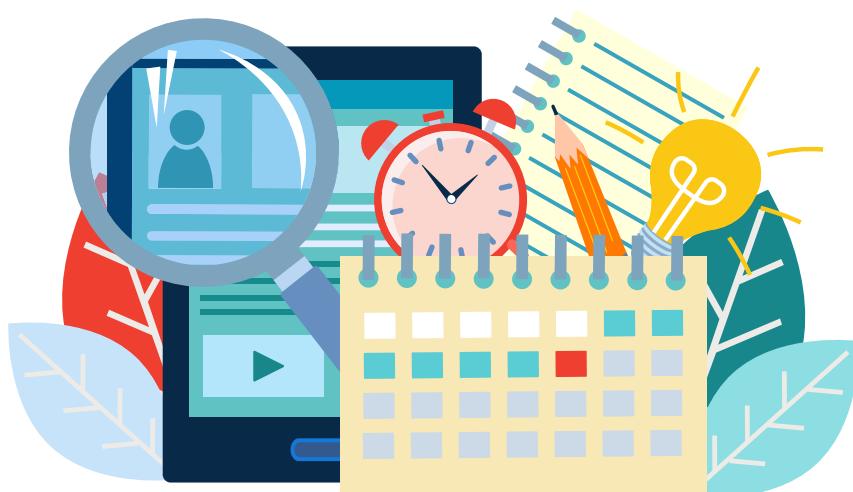
If the answer to the question is "no," you may want to go back over your decisions and reconsider the choices made at each step. Even if you are satisfied with your choices at this point, things might change. Just remember that new career goals could also require new plans. It is okay to change your mind. If you decide to pursue a career in a new field, you will want to go through the Career Decision-Making Process again. But it will be easier with the skills you have learned in Career Success.

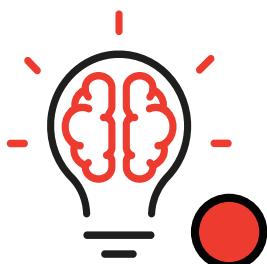


## Rate Their Plans

Throughout this workbook, you have read several students' plans. If these were the plans for one of your friends, how would you rate them? If your friend's plan needs a little work, what improvements would you recommend? Write down your advice, and don't forget to follow that guidance when you are ready to implement your own plan.

For now, let's find out which plans are more (Five Stars) and less (One Star) likely to succeed, according to some experts. You will also find suggestions on how to improve each of the plans. Did you rank the plans the same or differently? Why?





## 1 Star

*Good idea, but needs a lot more work.*



## 2 Stars

*Better! But we'd recommend more research.*



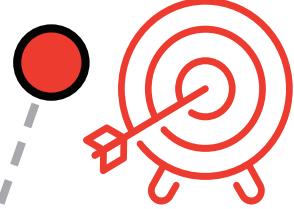
## 3 Stars

*Thinking like a winner and putting together a solid plan.*



## 4 Stars

*Champion mindset and a great future plan.*



## 5 Stars

*Watch out, world! This person has a goal AND a vision to get there.*

**Let's Get Rating!**

## Koji



Koji knows which career he wants and has taken steps to make sure it happens. He has talked to his parents and contacted a military recruiter. He has investigated his career path and knows what will be required. The only other thing Koji may want to investigate is possible career opportunities if he chooses to leave the military once he has fulfilled his service commitments.



### 5 Stars

**Activity:** Koji mentioned that he didn't know there were so many other Air Force jobs besides being a pilot. Go to [TexasCareerCheck.com](http://TexasCareerCheck.com) to see just how many Air Force occupation titles there are, and browse the other branches while you're there.

## Josephina



Although Josephina only began to plan during her last semester in high school, she has spoken with her counselor, selected a career direction (paramedic), chosen a college (TSTC) and started to think of how she will pay for her education. Had she done these things a few years earlier, she would have known which classes would better prepare her. In addition, she could have received scholarships or grants earlier to help her pay for college expenses, though she can still apply now.



### 3 Stars

**Question:** What can Josephina do to look for financial aid? Where should she look for resources?

## Cesar



4 Stars

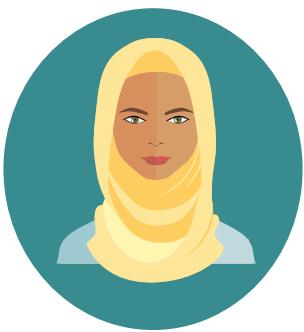
Cesar is the first in his family to go to college. While a two-year college is a good option because it will let him finish his studies quickly before getting a job or continuing his education, he should not feel like a two-year school is his only choice. If he wants to, he should absolutely pursue a four-year school or university. Either way, Cesar should ask his college counselor about programs for transitioning from high school to college. These can help him learn how to combine academics and campus life.

**Question:** How can Cesar's parents and/or other family help him even though they haven't been to college yet?

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## Amira



2 Stars

Amira is a sophomore, and it's okay for her to be unsure about a career direction at this point. However, having an undeclared major or randomly taking courses in college is not an effective path to success. During the next two years, Amira can use tools like [TexasCareerCheck.com](http://TexasCareerCheck.com)'s Interest Profiler to find which careers stand out to her. She can then look for appropriate schools or training programs. Simply going to college because her friends will be attending will not help Amira find her own Career Success.

**Question:** How can Amira take a more logical approach to picking which college she will attend?

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## Jonathan



Jonathan's got his stuff together. He's aiming high and going after a career in a competitive field doing something he loves. He's taking his dad's advice and not "putting all his eggs in one basket." In other words, he is pursuing a backup plan by getting a solid education in business at a four-year university, keeping his options open for postgraduate studies and starting his own business. He's on the right track here.



**5 Stars**

**Activity:** If you were aiming high, what dream would you chase? If you had to have a backup plan, what would it be?

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## Terrence



Terrence is smart to look at the differences in four-year and two-year schools for the occupation of video game designer. Terrence should get as much information as possible and ask family and friends if they know anyone who works at a video game company. He should also look for video game companies at career fairs and try to secure an internship.

**Question:** What other occupations are available in the video game industry? What kind of education or training is needed for these other occupations?



**4 Stars**

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## Jaeda



Jaeda is definitely on track to becoming a chef. She has work experience, so she knows what type of work will be required. She has investigated the educational requirements and is open to the different opportunities that will be available after her education is complete. Jaeda should now talk to her counselor to find out what financial aid is available to help her pay for her education.



### 5 Stars

**Activity:** Name as many occupations you can think of that could be found in a restaurant. How many require specialized skills and training?



### End of the Book, but Not Your Search

Congratulations! You've made it to the end of the workbook, but don't stop here. The career goals you may have decided on today could change in a few years. If that happens, just revisit this workbook for a tried-and-true method of exploration, research, and decision-making to help you discover new occupation opportunities. That's the best thing about the workbook apart from its processes and content—it can be revisited and reused as often as and whenever you need it—so come back to it anytime!

Make sure to continue your research and exploration using resources from the Texas Workforce Commission, such as [TexasRealityCheck.com](https://TexasRealityCheck.com) and [TexasCareerCheck.com](https://TexasCareerCheck.com). They are always free to use, and data in these tools is regularly updated, so they will always provide current and relevant information.



# Check us out!



## ADDRESS

Texas Workforce Commission  
Labor Market & Career Info.  
101 E. 15th St., Room 380  
Austin, TX 78778-0001



## PHONE

Hotline: 1 (800) 822-7526  
Fax: (512) 936-3204



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[lmci@twc.texas.gov](mailto:lmci@twc.texas.gov)



## WEBSITES

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