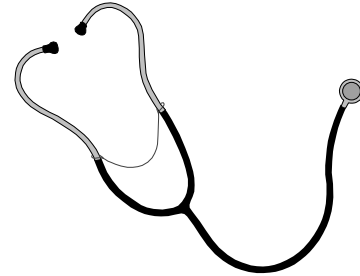
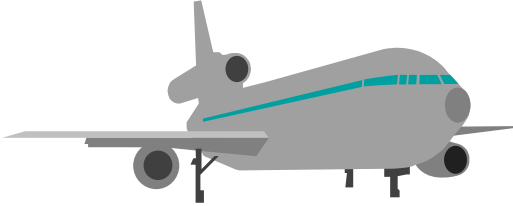


## Independent Living Skills Module III



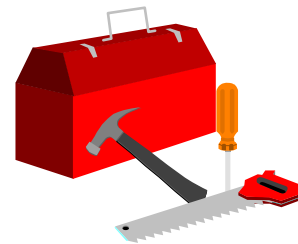
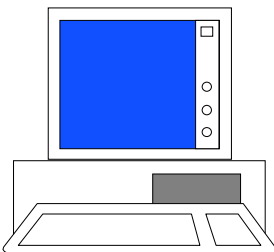
### VOCATIONAL TRAINING/CERTIFICATION PROGRAMS

Vocational training and certification programs offer a wide variety of courses in many careers. The entry requirements differ greatly. Some programs require a GED or high school diploma for acceptance into the course. Others offer a combination of GED classes and vocational training. Some programs are free of charge; others require tuition payments. A selected few might pay you a stipend. Training/certification programs also vary in duration. Most Nurse's Aide programs, for example, last for about six weeks, while computer training programs average six months. Some programs are held during the day and are full time. Others are offered through night classes and allow part-time attendance. To get more specific information about certification and training programs available in your area, contact your local Office of Employment and Training.

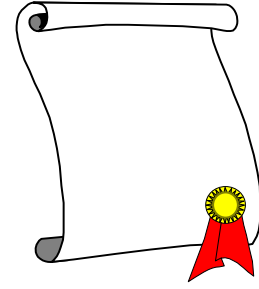


#### ACTIVITY

Contact your local office of Employment and Training to get more specific information about certification and training programs.



## Independent Living Skills Module III



### COLLEGES & UNIVERSITIES

#### **TWO-YEAR COLLEGES**

Private and community colleges offer many certification and Associate's Degree programs. To get accepted into a two-year college, applicants must have either a high school diploma or GED. Some two-year colleges require that applicants submit SAT scores. Most schools offer extensive tutoring and academic support services. Many students transfer to four-year schools upon completing their Associate's Degree. To be considered a full-time student you must be enrolled for at least 12 credit hours. Most two-year schools do not offer on-campus housing. Financial aid is available to students who demonstrate a need for financial assistance.

Here are some examples of degree and certification programs that might be available at a two-year college.

#### **Associate's Degrees**

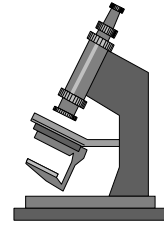
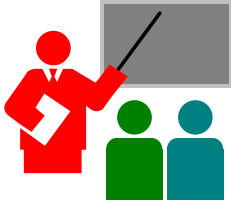
Accounting  
Business Administration  
Chemical Science  
Communications  
Computer Science  
Criminal Justice  
Culinary Arts  
Early Childhood Education  
Electronic Technology  
English  
Hotel Management/Travel  
Human Services  
Mathematics  
Medical Radiography  
Music  
Nuclear Medicine  
Nursing  
Office Administration  
Physics/Engineering  
Psychology

#### **Certificate Programs**

Accounting  
Computer Programming  
Culinary Arts  
Desktop Publishing  
Early Childhood Development  
Gerontology  
Health Care Management  
Medical Assistant  
Office Management  
Phlebotomy Technician  
Surgical Technology

**Source: Bunker Hill Community  
College, Boston**

## Independent Living Skills Module III



### FOUR-YEAR COLLEGES

Private and public colleges and universities offer Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science degrees in a wide-variety of subjects including Liberal Arts, Education, Nursing, Business Administration, Engineering, and pre-professional programs (pre-medical, pre-dental, pre-law, pre-veterinary). To get accepted into a four-year college, applicants must have a high school diploma, GED, or Associate's degree as well as have taken the SAT and Achievement Tests. Often private colleges require a personal interview with an Admissions Officer and recommendations from past teachers. Many four-year schools offer the option of living in a residence hall (dormitory) or commuting from home. Some schools offer the option of cooperative education that allows students to spend certain semesters applying the knowledge they gained in the classroom to actual businesses in a temporary paid position. All schools have extensive academic support services. To be considered a full-time student you must be enrolled for at least 12 credit hours. Financial aid is available to those students who demonstrate a need for financial assistance.

Here are some examples of degree and certification programs that might be available at a four-year college.

#### **Bachelor of Arts/Bachelor of Science Degree Programs**

**Liberal Arts** (English, history, foreign languages & literatures, linguistics, biology, chemistry, physics, math, sociology, psychology, geology, international relations, political science, economics, religion, philosophy, social psychology, computer science, Afro-American studies, anthropology, archeology, bio-chemistry, music, art history, architecture, marine biology, fine arts, drama, communications, classical studies, Greek, Latin, geography, European area studies, Asian studies, etc.)

**Nursing** (RN certification)

**Education** (Early childhood education, educational psychology, educational counseling, high school teacher certification programs, etc.)

**Business Administration** (Accounting, marketing, finance, management, human resource management, public policy, hotel management, etc.)

**Engineering** (electrical, mechanical, aerospace, aeronautical, chemical, engineering psychology, civil, environmental, engineering physics, biomedical, etc.)

**Pre-professional programs** *\*\*These programs all lead to graduate study.* (pre-medical, pre-dental, pre-law, pre-veterinary.)

# So you wanna go to college...?

Higher education opportunities are out there, but it can be confusing to get the process started. Here are some tips!

**Tip 1: Decide to make a career out of doing something you love.**

There is nothing more discouraging than getting up everyday to go to a job you hate just because you have to pay bills. If you study and then work in a field that you're excited about, you'll be more likely to put a lot of energy into learning and working your craft, and feel more positive overall.

**Tip 2: Think about how much time you want to invest in reaching your goal.**

Two-year and four-year colleges offer many of the same major areas of study. The main difference is that with a two-year school, you will receive an associate's degree, indicating an average level of study in a specific area. With a four-year program, you are awarded a bachelor's degree, indicating a wider array of topics studied and a greater breadth of knowledge. A four-year degree will also typically bring a higher earning potential once your education is completed.

If you have a high school diploma, you can apply to either type of program. If you've earned a G.E.D., you will need to at least begin at a two-year college before transferring to a four-year school. Most four-year universities will not accept the G.E.D. as adequate preparation for a bachelor's degree-level of study.

**Tip 3: Prepare to take the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT).**

The SAT is an aptitude test used by almost all colleges and universities to help determine how successful you will be as a student. Many studies have found a strong link between how well a person does on this test and how good their grades will be in college. The test tries to measure how well you have been taught over the years, as well as how much you've understood your lessons.

You can prepare for the test by taking SAT preparation classes, but you will typically only learn test-taking skills that are specific to the SAT, not new academic material. If you're concerned that you have not been adequately prepared to take the test, don't worry. Colleges and universities look at a number of things before they offer or deny admission. Admissions committees are interested in knowing what extracurricular activities you participated in while in school, such as sports, part-time work, dance, etc. They also want to know about the life experiences that affected your ability to study, such as foster care, frequent family moves, or needing to help raise younger brothers or sisters. All of these factors are given a lot of weight in helping a school decide if you are a good candidate. Your application, essay, recommendations, and interview will also be very important to the admissions committee.

DSS can assist you in getting a fee waiver to take the SAT. Contacting the Teen Peer Line at 1-800- 238-7868 will put you in touch with someone who can help get you started.

## Independent Living Skills Module III

### **Tip 4: Apply early for financial aid.**

Forget the usual deadline of March 1<sup>st</sup> or 15<sup>th</sup>. Get your Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) filed as soon as you get the form and your W-2 tax filing information. By law, all W-2 forms must be received by January 31<sup>st</sup> of any year. On January 31<sup>st</sup> or February 1<sup>st</sup>, use the information to complete your FAFSA and mail it off immediately.

Each school has a certain amount of money to award in financial aid. If you send in your request for aid too late, any money the school may have wanted to give you will be gone. Sending in your request too early, (before you get your W-2's) might result in your over- or under-estimating your earnings to such a degree that you will have to resubmit financial earning information, slowing down the school's ability to give you *any* type of aid.

### **Tip 5: Make sure you have someone review the essay for your application.**

Your college essay will say a lot about you, so you want to present yourself well. Admissions committees will look unfavorably on careless, unclear sentences, poor spelling, grammar, and punctuation. They may also look less favorably on a handwritten essay, as opposed to an easier-to-read typewritten paper. If writing clearly and persuasively is not your strong point, it is critical that you have your writing reviewed by a teacher, guidance counselor, social worker, or anyone else you trust to have the necessary skill to help your essay become the best you can make it.

It is also usually very difficult to know what to write about. Just keep in mind that the admissions committee is interested in knowing what makes you unique. They are interested in discovering why you would be an asset to their school. If your life has been different from the average college freshman, write about it. If you've faced some unique challenges and are still driven to rise above and succeed, put that into words. Decision committees can't help but be moved to learn about the things that make you interesting, able to handle a challenge, and determined to succeed. These are all the traits that a prospective student needs to meet the heavy demands of college-level work.

### **Tip 6: Be prepared for your interview.**

Many small and mid-size four-year schools will ask you to come in for an interview. As with the essay, the school will use this as an opportunity to see who you are and why you would be an asset to their university. You can prepare for it by writing on a few subjects you would like to talk about. An interviewer will usually give you the chance to stress any area of interest. So, if you tend to talk excitedly about politics, car repair, dance, or even flying airplanes, work this into the conversation. If the interviewer does not ask directly, find a way to weave it into your discussion. It shows interest, passion, and commitment to something larger than yourself – and schools love that.

## Independent Living Skills Module III

Another way to prepare is to get a friend, teacher, social worker, etc., to sit with you and ask different questions that the interviewer might ask. Typical questions are:

“Why are you interested in this school?”

” What do you hope to achieve with a degree from \_\_\_\_\_?”

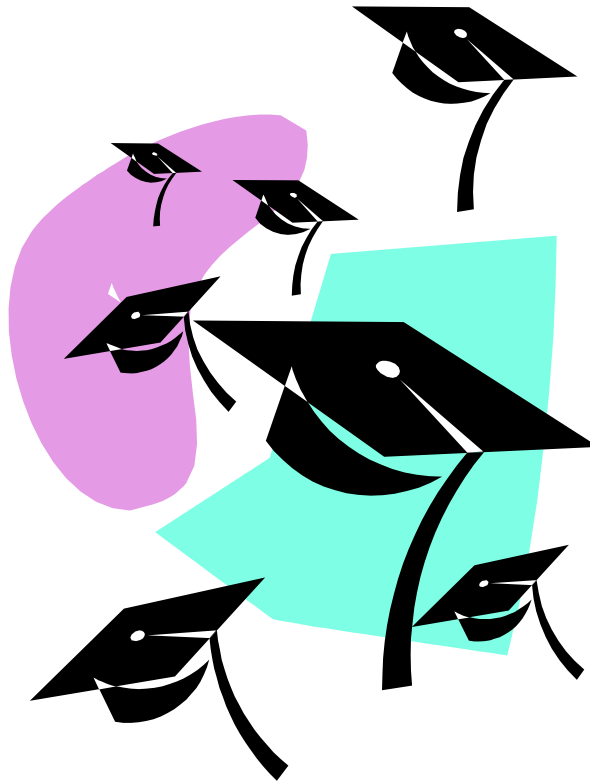
” What interests do you have?”

” What type of activities did you participate in during high school?”

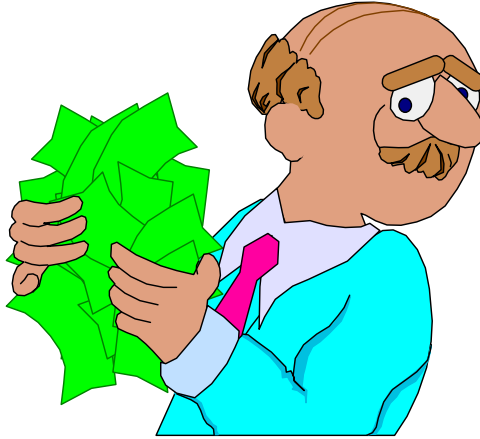
” What are your academic strengths and weaknesses?”

” How would your friends describe you?”

Practicing answers to questions like these, as well as some you make up on your own, will prove to be very helpful once you find yourself in the actual interview. Practicing aloud helps you to get used to what you will sound like to the interviewer. You want your answers to be clear and concise, while shedding light on why you are a natural choice for admission to your school of choice.



## Independent Living Skills Module III



### HOW WILL I PAY FOR SCHOOL?

Whether you enroll in a Certificate Program, a two-year college or a four-year college, **financial aid** is available to students who demonstrate the need for financial assistance. Financial aid programs include scholarships and grants, the federal government's work-study program, and loans. Financial aid is awarded to students from funds provided by the federal government and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and is administered by the financial aid office in each school. Listed below are some samples of financial resources that you may use to finance your education:



#### Scholarships & Grants

Brooks Brothers Scholars Program  
Gilbert Matching Scholarship (State)  
MIT Educational Talent Search  
Orphan Foundation Scholarship Program  
Paul Douglas Teacher Scholarship (Federal)  
Pell Grant (Federal)  
Perpetual Benevolent Fund Baybank  
Middlesex  
Public Service Scholarship  
Tuition Waiver (State)  
William Warren Scholarship(DSS)  
Foster Child State Grant Program(DSS/State)  
Foster Child Tuition Waiver(DSS/State)  
Adopted Child Tuition Waiver(DSS/State)

#### Loans

Health Education Assistance Loans (HEAL)  
Mass Plan  
Massachusetts Family Education Loan  
MEFA Loans  
NELLIE MAE  
No Interest Loan (NIL)  
Perkins Loan (Federal)  
  
PLUS Loan (Parent)  
Stafford Loan (formerly GSL)  
Supplemental Loans for Students (SLS)  
TERI Loans

## Independent Living Skills Module III

### DID YOU KNOW THAT...?

There are some sources of aid available that are specifically designed to aid young people who have been in care or lived through challenging personal circumstances. An example of some are:

National Foster Parent Assoc. – Eaton Scholarship Fund	\$1,000
The Oliver Project	\$4,000
Orphan Foundation of America	\$500-5,000
The R.O.S.E Scholarship	pays for full tuition up to \$10,000
Christian A. Herter Memorial Scholarship	pays for up to 50% of financial need

The **Department of Social Services College Scholarship Guide** is updated yearly and includes detailed information on these and other sources of aid. To order your free guide call 1-800-238-7868.

DSS also offers the following:

### **William E. Warren Scholarship**

This is scholarship money that is awarded to youths under the age of 25 who have been in the care of DSS. The award ranges from \$250- \$5,000, and can be applied to two-and four-year colleges, as well as vocational and technical schools.

### **Massachusetts Foster Child Grant**

This state grant is offered to youth under 25 years of age who were never adopted or returned home, and who were placed in care through a Care and Protection petition (significant abuse or neglect concerns). The state grant will cover up to \$6,000 of unmet expenses at a qualifying school. A qualifying school may include public or private colleges and universities that are either in- or out-of-state, as well as vocational and technical certificate programs

### **Foster Child Tuition Waiver**

Current or former foster youth attending a Massachusetts public two- or four year college or university may also qualify to attend such a school tuition-free. The youth would meet the following criteria: 1) be under 25 years of age; 2) never have been adopted or returned home; and 3) have spent time in care under a Care and Protection petition. All other charges (room, board, books, fees, travel, etc.) are not covered under this form of aid. Additional expenses must be covered by other forms of assistance.

## Independent Living Skills Module III

### Adopted Child Tuition Waiver

This waiver acts in the same manner as the Foster Child Tuition Waiver. However, the only two criteria a youth would have to meet are as follows:

- Under 25 years
- Adopted through DSS or one of its contracted agencies

If you think you qualify, speak with your social worker about the application process, or call Adolescent Services at (617) 748-2000.

The **Higher Education Information Center** uses an extensive database of scholarship and financial aid information that can help you learn about the many types of assistance that you may qualify for, including those listed above. They can also help you complete the financial aid application. The toll-free number for Higher Ed. is 1-800-442-1171. They have offices in:

**Boston (617) 536-0200**

**Lynn (781) 592-0440**

**New Bedford (508) 996-3147**

**Pittsfield (413) 499-9531**

**Springfield (413) 593-8807**

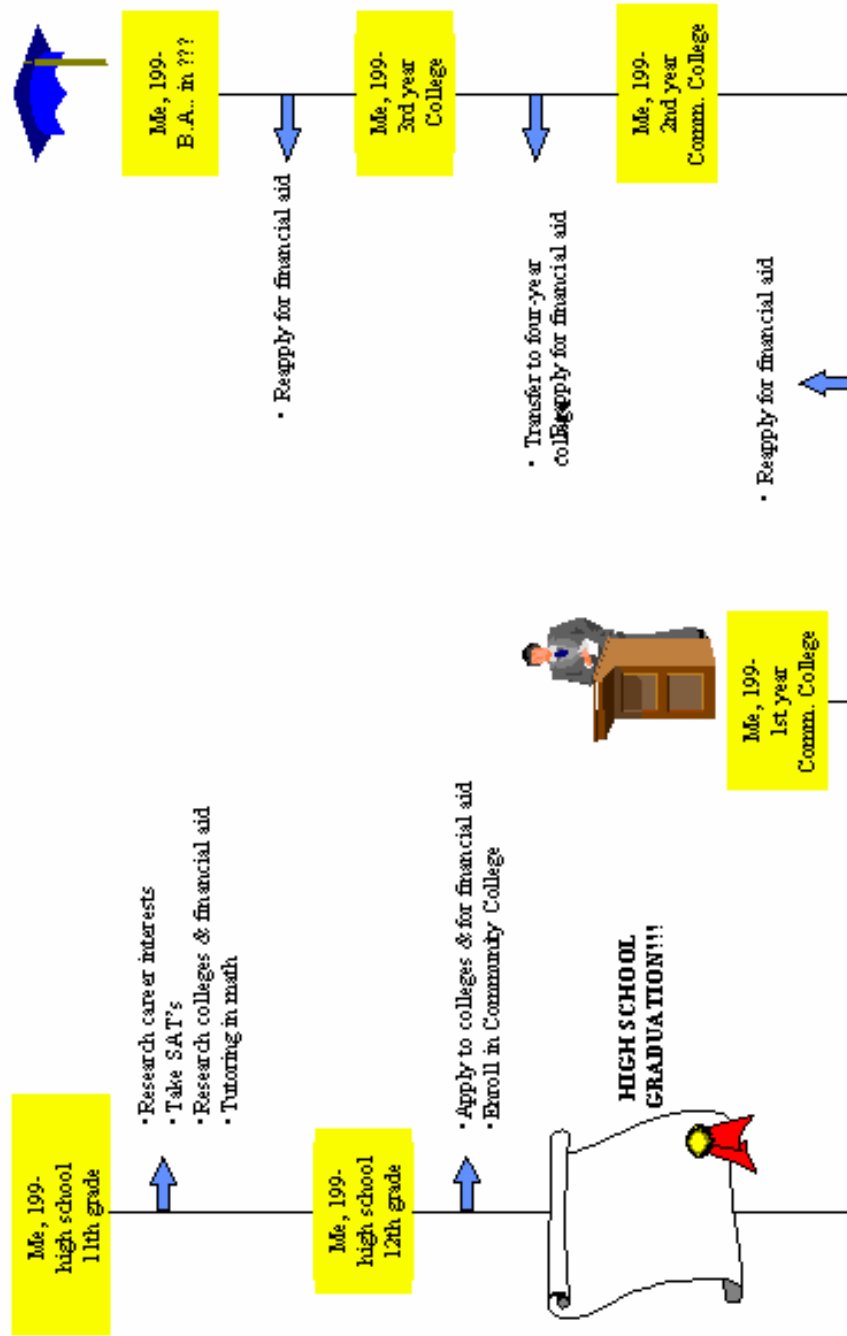
**Worcester (508) 755-2592**

The **Higher Education Information Center** can also offer help with finding the right college or vocational program, completing the admissions applications, choosing the career best suited to your interests, and may even be able to provide a waiver to allow you to apply to a school(s) free of charge.

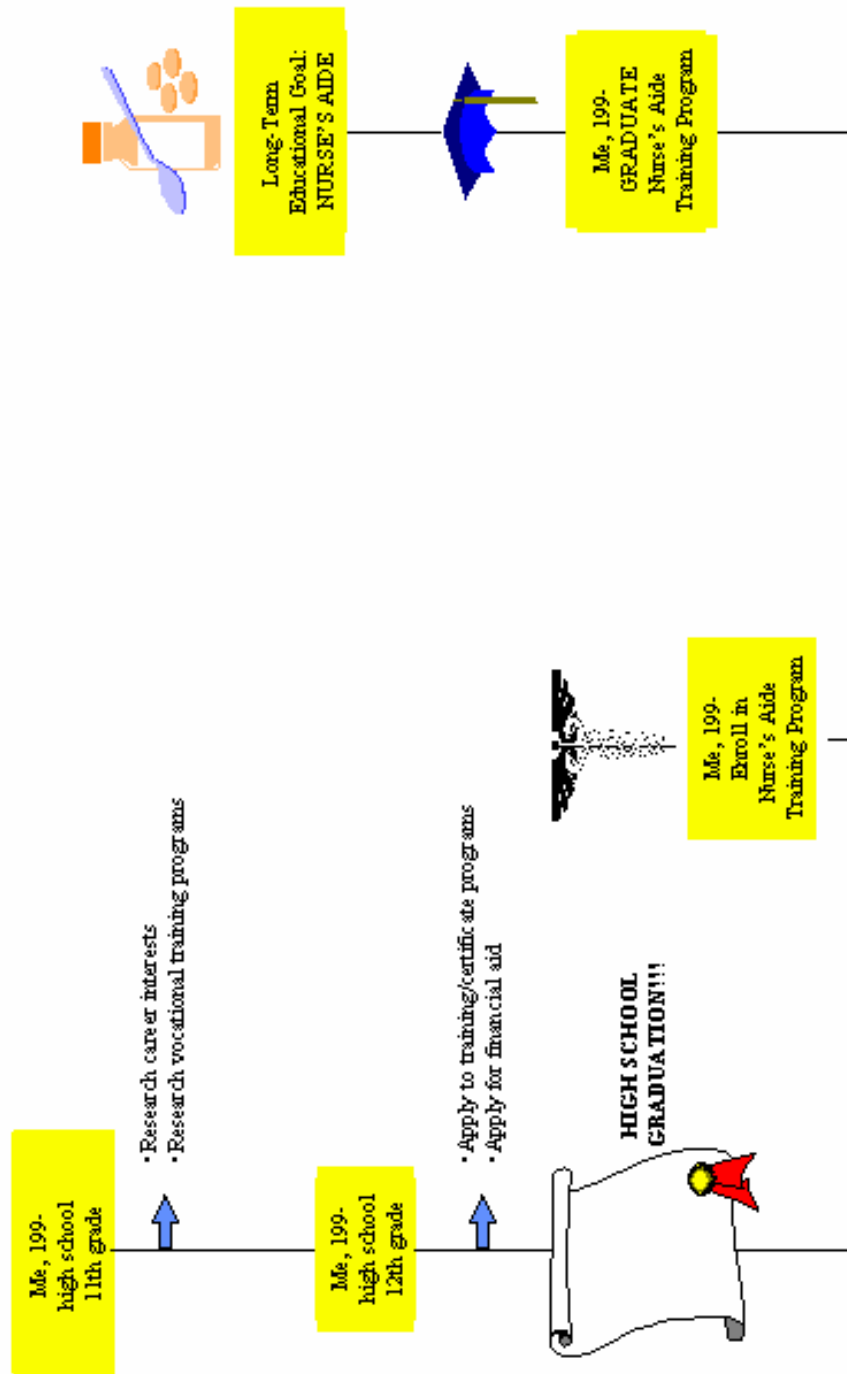
Now that you have completed your career interest assessment and have researched the many options available to you, you are ready to develop your Educational Career Plan. Utilize the following sample plans and your educational inventory to write your own career plan. If your goals and educational plans change in the future, you can always establish a new plan for yourself.



**CAREER EDUCATION PLAN  
EXAMPLE 1:**



**CAREER EDUCATION PLAN  
EXAMPLE 2:**





## Independent Living Skills Module III

### **EMPLOYMENT SKILL ASSESSMENT**

The following questions will help you identify job seeking skills in which you excel and target those which you need to develop. By yourself or with your team try to answer each of the questions as honestly as possible. After completing this independent living skills assessment, review it with your team and identify those skills you would like to strengthen.

	<i>I do not know how to do this</i>	<i>I need to know more about this</i>	<i>I can do/ have done this</i>
1. Know the kind of job I want.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Am aware of the general qualities a potential employer is looking for in an employee.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Know what skills and qualities I have to offer an employer.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Know which jobs I am qualified for.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Know that my first jobs might have to be different from my areas of interest and career choices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Know that I might have to apply several times before obtaining employment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Know where to look for a job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Can use the classified ads to find jobs I am interested in.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Am able to make telephone calls to a potential employer to get a job interview.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Know how to dress appropriately for a job interview.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Know the importance of being on time for an interview.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. Have practiced and know how to answer questions that might be asked at a job interview.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Independent Living Skills Module III

	<i>I do not know how to do this</i>	<i>I need to know more about this</i>	<i>I can do/ have done this</i>
<b>13.</b> Have practiced and know how to fill out a regular job application form.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>14.</b> Have written the names and addresses of references, education, and job history information, including important dates and the name of the person to call in case of an emergency on my job fact sheet.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>15.</b> Know how to utilize the Department of Employment and Training.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>16.</b> Can write a resume.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>17.</b> Know what to consider when planning to accept a job (duties, work hours, pay, location, etc.).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>18.</b> Can write a letter to a potential employer to thank him/her for an interview.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>19.</b> Know what job discrimination is and know where to get legal help if discrimination becomes a problem.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



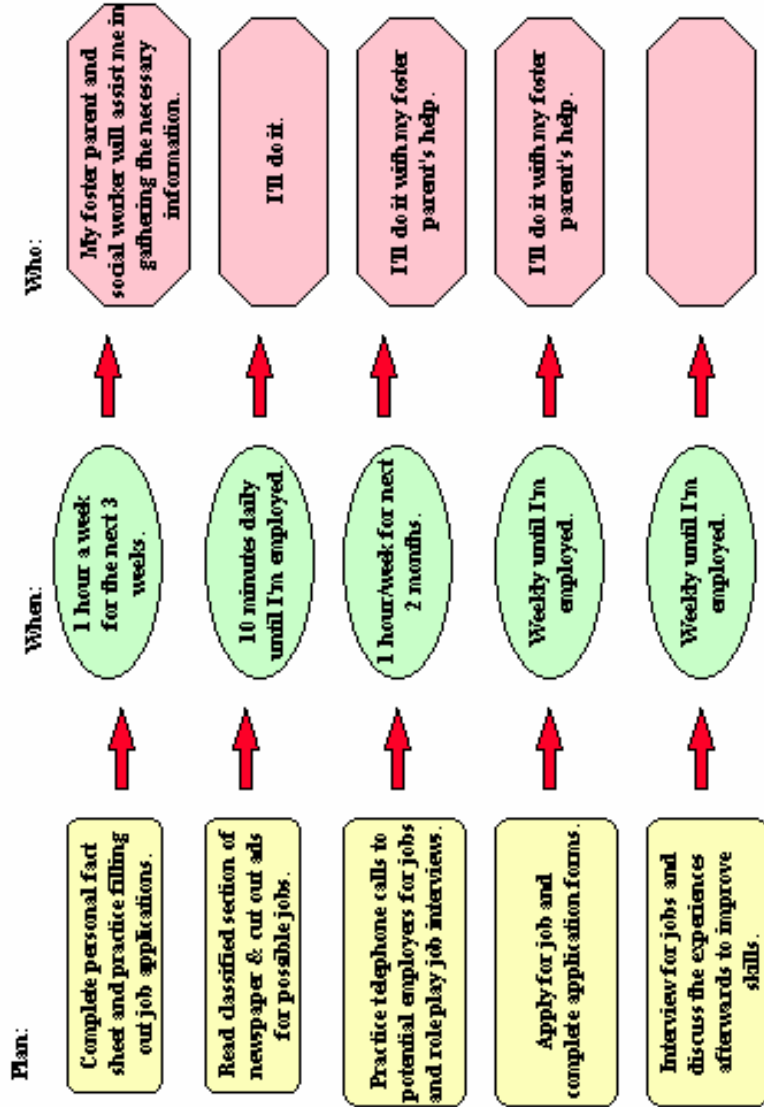
Independent Living Skills Module III

You have now completed the assessment section and identified those skills in job seeking that you would like to strengthen in order to be better able to do things on your own. The following guide can help you in planning how you can learn about and practice these skills. Choose a few skills that you want to develop, and with your team, write down your plan of action. Remember, once you accomplish these goals you can go back to your assessment tool and select new goals to build on your new skills.

**EXAMPLE**  
**GOAL: TO IMPROVE JOB SEEKING SKILLS**

State Skill 1:

To Find A Part Time Job



Independent Living Skills Module III

GOAL: TO IMPROVE JOB SEEKING SKILLS

**State Skill 1:**  
to be developed  
and/or improved



**Plan:**  
how do you plan to learn,  
develop and improve this skill?



**When:**  
when, where, and how often will you  
work on this skill and by when will you  
have mastered this?



**Who:**  
will assist you?

**State Skill 2:**  
to be developed  
and/or improved



**Plan:**  
how do you plan to learn,  
develop and improve this skill?



**When:**  
when, where, and how often will you  
work on this skill and by when will you  
have mastered this?



**Who:**  
will assist you?

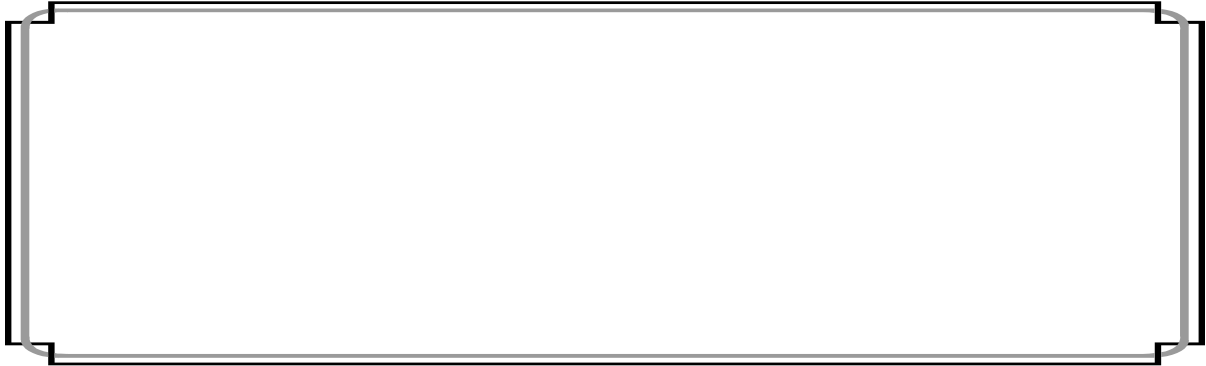
## Independent Living Skills Module III

### EMPLOYMENT PREPHASE

Finding our first jobs can be very exciting and rewarding. However, it might not always be easy. Some of us may not know how many skills we have to offer.

Can you describe qualities that you have other than work experience which would be important to a potential employer?

**I AM:**

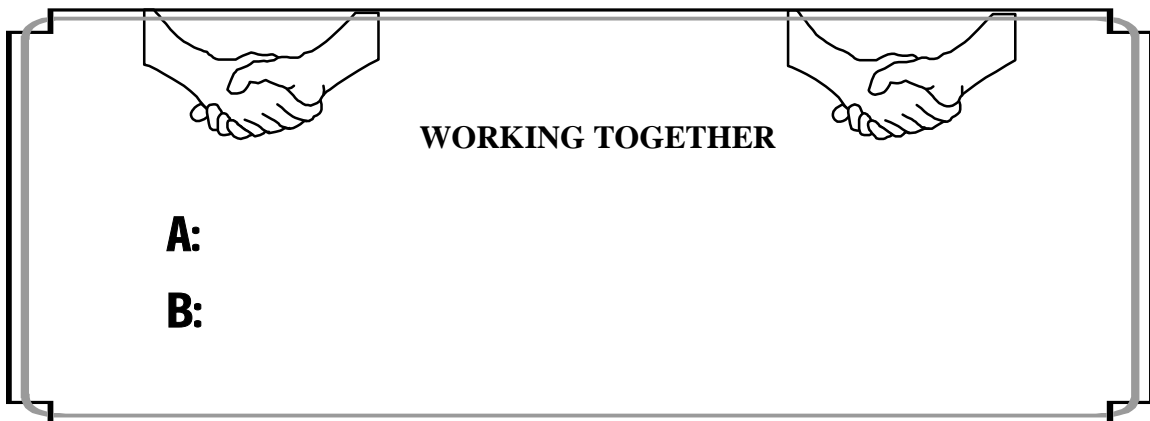


In the following exercises, we will work on additional skills important to potential employers.

### **TEAMWORK:**

**A.** *Why do you think it is important to be able to work as part of a team?*

**B.** *What personal qualities do you think are important in a good team member?*



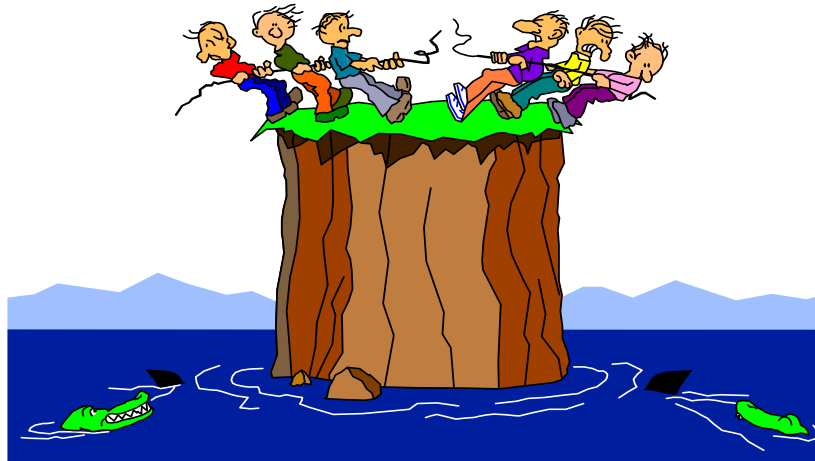
**WORKING TOGETHER**

**A:**

**B:**

### Independent Living Skills Module III

**C.** Steve, Kelley, and Laura work together in a warehouse. Their manager asks them to unpack and shelve a shipment of cereal boxes. Steve and Laura talk about how best to work together. They suggest that the most effective way to accomplish their task is if one of them would open the boxes and the other transport the cereal boxes over to the shelves and the third person would stock the shelves. However, Kelley states that she does not like Laura and, therefore, does not want to work with her. She prefers to work by herself. *How do you think this effects everybody's ability to accomplish this task?*



*How could they work together to resolve their conflict?*

## Independent Living Skills Module III

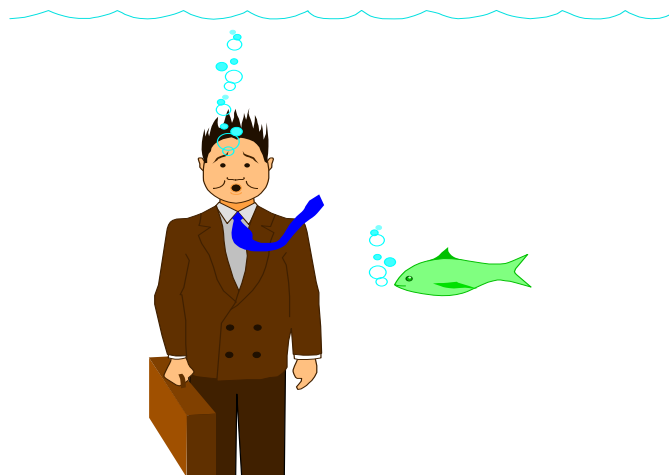
### DECISION MAKING/PROBLEM SOLVING:

We all have to make many decisions and solve problems every day. We have to evaluate the pros and cons and use our judgment to come up with the best possible solutions. Our ability to make good decisions and to solve problems in the work place is based on the same principles and valuable to every employer.

Tamara works in a shoe store. All of a sudden she hears water running. As she goes to the back of the store, she sees that a pipe is broken and that water is gushing out onto the floor. Tamara does not know what to do. She decides to wait for the manager to return from her lunch break.

**A. *What do you think happens to the store in the meantime?***

**B. *How would have you handled this situation?***



**Independent Living Skills Module III**

**COMMUNICATION:**



*Why do you think good communication skills are important to an employer?*

---

*Do you think you have good communication skills?* \_\_\_\_\_

---

**TAKE AN INVENTORY!**

Do you usually get your point across?	Yes	No
Do you use the most appropriate language to express yourself?	Yes	No
Do others understand what you want to say?	Yes	No
Are you able to listen to others?	Yes	No

*If you answered no to any of these questions, can you think of any way to improve your communication skills?*

**STRATEGY TO IMPROVE MY COMMUNICATION SKILLS:**

## Independent Living Skills Module III

### ABILITY TO FOLLOW DIRECTIONS:

The ability to follow directions enables us to learn and to do our job.

**A.** Kathy works in a women's clothing store. The manager asked her to close the store by herself for the first time. The manager explained to Kathy in detail how to lock the doors and turn on the alarm. Kathy was preoccupied and thinking about the date she had that night. When Kathy was closing the store she was in a hurry and could not remember how to secure the store. The next morning when Kathy arrived at work she saw a police car in front of the store. The store had been broken into over night. *Why do you think the store was broken into? How could the break-in have been prevented?*

**B.** Dan works as a prep cook in a restaurant and likes his job. One day, when it was very slow the restaurant manager asked Dan to clean the floors. Dan got angry and stated that cleaning the floors was not his job and he refused to do it. The manager explained to him that it was not really busy and he really wanted him to clean the floor. Dan got angry and loudly refused again. The manager fired him. *What would you have done in Dan's situation?*

*What would you have done as Dan's employer?*

Sometimes it might be difficult to take directions.

*Under what circumstances do you have difficulties following directions?*

---

---