



Self-Guided Career Planning Tip Sheets for Older Youth

Finding a job or starting a new career is very exciting, but it can also be challenging. The tip sheets in this packet are designed to guide you to find, interview for, and get started in a job that's right for you. A job is about more than making money; it's also an opportunity to grow, to learn various skills, and to form new relationships.

Each of the following guides will give you basic info on a key activity related to career planning. You'll start by doing some background reading. Once you've read the online articles, review the steps and tips provided. Work with your CASA volunteer or another mentor to brainstorm ideas and create an action plan to get going.

Whether you're finding your first job or moving to a new one, these tip sheets can help point you in the right direction to navigate the many resources available to you. You've got a lot to offer the world. All of us at CASA wish you the best as you get started planning your career!

Career Planning Tip Sheet #1

Writing about Yourself: Resumes and Cover Letters

Career Planning Tip Sheet #2

Finding the Job That's Right for You: Job Fit, Reality Checks, and Applications

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Making Yourself Successful: Doing Your Best in the New Job

Writing about Yourself: Resumes and Cover Letters

Your paper or digital resume is a snapshot of who you are as a worker/employee. You don't have to have much or any experience to create one. It's a good idea to create a basic resume, tailoring it as necessary when there's a specific job you're applying for. Most jobs require you to fill out an online application; your resume will help you do this since it contains the details you'll usually need to apply for the position.

➔ **Important Point:** *You'll have a better chance of getting a job if you help the hiring manager or recruiter "connect the dots." Include information so they can see how your experience, skills, and qualities match the job description.*

Getting Started

Read these two articles:

- <https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/resumes-cover-letters/how-to-write-a-resume-employers-will-notice>
- <https://www.careercontessa.com/advice/20-must-have-skills-to-put-on-your-resume/>

Steps

1. Read the job description / brainstorm all the things you've done or know how to do.
2. List your contact information (name, email address, home address, and phone number).
3. Write a professional summary, a 2-3 sentence that describes you at a high level ("elevator speech"). Can include personal qualities (e.g., hard-working, enthusiastic).
4. Add sections that describe your background: work experience, skills, volunteer work, interests/hobbies, education, extracurricular activities, awards/achievements.
5. Think about who can be a reference for you. Get their contact information (phone and email).

Tips

- You can create a resume even if you don't have paid work experience. Your background and personality may be a great fit for your first job! Many managers are happy to give people a chance.
- Remember to show results and accomplishments in addition to what you did/do or know how to do. This can include descriptions and responsibilities of what you've done and as well as facts & figures.
- Find someone to help you phrase things to sound stronger (most people are overly modest) and to make sure you are matching what you write to the job you're applying for.
- Have someone proof your resume. Accuracy is very important.
- Print your resume or save it as a Word or PDF document.

Brainstorm

- What have you done? What experiences have you had (such as jobs, school, volunteering)?
- What do you know how to do?
- How would you describe yourself?
- Who can be a reference for you?

Notes / Action items

Finding the Job That’s Right for You: Job Fit, Reality Checks, and Applications

Once you have your resume ready, you can start looking and applying for jobs. In most cases, you’ll use this tip sheet to focus on where to start to get a job or internship to earn money as you build your life and prepare for the “job part” of taking care of yourself as an adult. If you’re looking for a job after high school or college, you may even choose to explore an occupation or career (more long-term jobs throughout your lifetime).

→ Important Point: *Creating an action plan and getting support from others are important! Write down what you’ll do every day to find and get a job. Think about your “fan club” and people who can give you advice on finding a job that’s right for you – one that’s a good “fit.” No one does this alone.*

Getting Started

Visit the [Career One Stop website](#) to get help going in the right direction. What’s the right job search approach for you? This website has A LOT of things to read. Start by looking at the page listed and read the sections that seem right for you.

Little or No Experience	Finding a Job	Looking for a Career or Occupation
Entry-level worker CareerOneStop	Job Search CareerOneStop	Explore Careers CareerOneStop

Steps

1. Create an action plan for finding a job. List what you’ll do, when you’ll do it, and who’s involved. See the sample action plan available (your CASA volunteer or Older Youth Coordinator can get it for you).
2. Know your needs and interests. List key things you would like from the job to help you prioritize.
3. Get help. Talk with your placement about how they can support you as apply for jobs and start working.
4. See what’s out there. Research available jobs or internships.
5. Apply for the job(s). Many will be online (mostly), but some will be in person.
6. Follow up. Watch for texts or emails from the hiring employer.

Tips

- Talk to people who know about jobs such as school or college counselors. Schedule time with the CASA Older Youth Coordinator. Network by reaching out to people who can give you ideas or may be hiring. [Network your way to a job | CareerOneStop](#) Watch for “we’re hiring” signs at local businesses and search online.
- Apply for several jobs. It often takes time to get an interview. It’s okay to be working on a few applications at the same time.
- Watch for job requirements and make sure “you’re in the ballpark.” If you notice you’re missing skills mentioned, consider taking online training. You can talk with someone at the Jobs Center and even take virtual courses available. Learn more at <https://jobs.mo.gov/media/pdf/coursea-informational-flyer>

Brainstorm

- What are things to consider when looking for a job? Do you have transportation? Do you need to walk to work or get funding for an Uber? What hours can you work?
- Who can give you information or ideas for finding a job? Who can you network with to learn more and build your confidence?
- What career fairs, internships, or programs are available to you?

Notes / Action items

Talking about Yourself: Interviews

A resume or application provides the *written* information about you that may help you get an interview. If an employer likes your resume, they will often put you on the “short list” of candidates to talk with to get to know you better. Interviews are your chance to make a great first impression and share more about why you’d be the right person for the job you applied for!

➔ **Important Point:** *Most people aren’t naturally comfortable at talking about themselves and can be overly modest. The more you practice saying positive things about yourself and why you’re the best person for the job, the better you’ll get at interviewing – and the more comfortable you’ll be.*

Getting Started

Read these two articles:

- <https://www.thebalancemoney.com/teen-job-interview-questions-and-best-answers-2063882#toc-common-teen-interview-questions>
- <https://www.understood.org/en/articles/job-interview-questions-to-practice-with-your-teen>

Steps

1. Research or make up questions that relate to the job you’re looking for.
2. Think about how you’d answer each question. Say your answer aloud.
3. Change what you said so it will clearly answer the interview question AND sound like you. Write notes you can look at before your future interview(s).
4. Find a “practice partner” – someone who will play the role of the interviewer and give you feedback.

Tips

- Use sample interview questions that you find online. This will save you time!
- Always write a thank-you note after an interview expressing gratitude for the person’s time and showing confidence you’d be the right person for this job.
- Debrief with your “practice partner.” Always start with listing what went WELL and then talk about what you’d like to do differently. Consider the verbal and non-verbal aspects. What did you say? How did you say it (for example, how were your posture, eye contact, and volume)?
- Remember that sometimes your first few interviews are like a dress rehearsal for the “main show” – the ones where you learn how to get good at interviews. Try not to be discouraged, but to see any interviews that don’t turn into a job as a learning experience to help you in the future. You’ve got this!

Brainstorm

- What questions were easy to answer? Which were difficult? Why?
- What are some ways you could answer the more difficult questions?
- What things can you do to stay calm before and during an interview?

Notes / Action items

Making Yourself Successful: Doing Your Best in the New Job

Jobs have tasks (the things you do) and involve relationships (customers, your manager, and your co-workers). You'll likely receive formal and/or informal training to learn about the job. You'll also get information on laws, pay, and other things. Below are tips and guidelines for getting off to a good start in your new job. Remember: Everyone was new once! You can challenge AND be kind to yourself as you learn how to do the new job.

➔ **Important Point:** *Getting the position is just the beginning. Your confidence will grow as you learn how to do your best work in the job and get along well with others. And you'll have fun and grow to be ready for your next job!*

Getting Started:

Read the articles listed. While they're written to "parents" and refer to "teens," they contain good insights about how to start off strong in a new job.

- https://www.huffpost.com/entry/prepare-teen-first-job_l_643ffb6ce4b04997b56ebdbb
- <https://money.usnews.com/careers/applying-for-a-job/articles/what-teens-must-know-before-starting-a-first-job>

Steps

1. Be clear on expectations. Are there objectives? Checklists to follow? Specific schedules?
2. Prepare yourself. Read everything you're given. Follow through on things you're asked to provide or do (e.g., documentation for the I-9 and other paperwork, uniforms/dress code).
3. Learn how to do the job. Whether you receive informal or formal training in your job, listen and take notes. Ask questions to be sure you understand.
4. Be ready. Make sure you're on time and ready to go when your shift starts. Keep in mind the things covered in training and ask questions to keep learning.
5. Show initiative. Once you've mastered the basics, ask how you can help and share ideas where appropriate. Taking initiative shows your manager that you care AND can build your reputation as a good worker.

Tips

1. Ask questions to be sure you understand what you need to do in your job.
2. Watch people who are good at the job. Observe what they do or say that makes them good at it.
3. Think from the point of view of others, especially your customers, manager, and co-workers.
4. Invite feedback! This will help show that you're open to being the best you can be (and it always feels better to get corrections or ideas when you ask for them).

Brainstorm together

- What things that you're good at already will help you be successful in your new job? What are you excited about?
- How would you define professionalism? What things can help you make a good first impression?
- What questions do you have about the job? About working in general if it's your first job?
- Where might you be nervous? What things are in your control? What things are not in your control – where you need to ask for help to be successful?

Notes / Action items