

Workplace Essential Skills

Integrated video, workbooks, and online GED prep

Part of the PBS LiteracyLink® Project, Workplace Essential Skills teaches skills and attitudes necessary to succeed at work.

Learners see how to prepare resumes and applications and how to prepare themselves for interviews and work. In-depth documentary and scripted footage shows learners what employers are looking for and how to thrive in a new job. Practice tests show learners what to expect and which skills and content areas they need to strengthen, and build confidence for test day.

24 documentary-style videos show people as they work, and use basic skills on the job; real-life job interviews; and scripted characters as they look for and start new jobs.

4 student workbooks (Employment, Communication & Writing, Reading, and Math) begin with a skills preview pre-test and evaluation chart. "Before You Watch" and "After You Watch" sections include pre- and post-tests with answer keys, vocabulary lists, resources, practice and evaluation.

Online lessons and activities at www.pbs.org/literacy use a short video clip and an actual Internet site to apply and extend the video lesson, and to develop individual learning goals.

Program Descriptions

Orientation

This program gives an overview of the LiteracyLink project and Workplace Essential Skills series materials, including video, print and online. Viewers will see and hear how learners are using Workplace Essential Skills to improve their basic skills and their opportunities in the workplace.

FINDING A JOB

1 Planning to Work

Why do we work? What does it mean to choose a career direction? This program helps viewers think about the skills and aptitudes they already have. Viewers will learn how and where to get information about skills they need to acquire to develop their careers.

2 Matching Skills and Jobs

Successful job seekers treat the job search as a job in itself. Finding a job that really fits your needs and your skills can be a log hard process. In this program, viewers will learn how to organize and carry out effective job searches using a variety of resources and tools.

3 Applying for Jobs

What's the best way to make sure your application stays in the "in" pile? How do employers use job applications? What are they looking for when they read an application? This program offers practical advice and tips on how the application process works and how to make sure the application makes the best impression possible.

4 Resumes Tests and Choices

Your resume is a great opportunity to make a good first impression on prospective employers. In this program viewers learn how to write an effective resume. Viewers also learn how to evaluate and compare job offers to decide which job will provide the best opportunity.

5 Interviewing

This program helps viewers understand how the interview process works, including how to prepare for an interview, and follow up afterward. Viewers will learn what employers look for during an interview, what to say and what to wear, plus some of the typical questions to be ready for.

KEEPING A JOB

6 Ready for Work

The focus shifts in this program from finding a job to making sure of getting off to a strong start in a new job. Viewers will explore the concept of being work ready, including learning how to set goals and plan for problem situations that may arise such as cars that won't start or no-show babysitters.

7 Workplace Safety

Every job carries certain safety risks. Understanding these risks, being knowledgeable about and knowing how to follow company safety procedures are an important part of being a responsible employee. This program presents a close up look at how workers in a variety of workplace situations deal with safety issues.

8 Learning at Work

Many new workers fail because they're afraid to ask questions that will help them learn their jobs. Taking responsibility for learning on the job is an important step in becoming a valued employee. This program gives viewers an understanding of the importance of learning at work, and tips on how to find out about available worksite training and education options.

COMMUNICATION

9 The Language of Work

Employers rate good communication skills among the highest qualities they value in their employees. Every workplace has its own style of communication and sometimes new workers have difficulty mastering the new language of work. This program explores workplace communication skills including speaking clearly, listening actively and solving problems through effective communications.

10 Communicating with Co-Workers and Supervisors

Exchanging information is the main purpose for communication in the workplace. Learning how to make your messages clear and complete is an important skill for every employee. This program shows viewers how to use effective communication strategies at work with particular emphasis on conflict resolution skills.

11 Working Together

Teamwork is another of the top-rated skills according to many employer surveys. Active listening, respect for other team members, and working together to solve problems are all essential skills in today's workplaces. In this program, viewers learn the importance of teamwork and how to be an effective team member.

12 Communicating with Customers

Excellent customer service is the hallmark of every successful business. Employees at all levels need to be aware of and strive for excellence in customer service. In this program viewers learn the important basics of customer service and how to provide it even under difficult circumstances.

WRITING

13 A Process for Writing

Poorly written memos, incomplete messages and hard-to-read reports can erode productivity and raise stress levels in any workplace. In this program viewers learn how to use a process approach to workplace writing and get an inside look at how a variety of workplaces use written communications.

14 Supplying Information: Directions, Forms, Charts

Forms and charts carry the important flow of information that keeps a business or worksheet going. Filling out forms accurately and completely may seem like drudgery but these skills are essential for a smoothly functioning workplace. This program shows viewers how typical business use forms and charts and helps viewers understand the importance of accuracy and care in handling these workplace tools.

15 Writing Memos and Letters

Writing effectively in the workplace often involves knowing when, how and what to write. Many workers lack confidence in their writing skill and as a result often try to avoid writing even when it's precisely the action that needs to be taken. This program reviews the writing process and demonstrates how using it can help improve workplace writing.

READING

16 Reading for a Purpose

Good reading skills can mean the difference between being an average worker and being an excellent worker. Today's workplace requires just about everyone to use reading comprehension skills to get their jobs done. This program helps viewers understand the different ways reading is used on the job and shows how to use strategies such as skimming and scanning to increase reading efficiency and comprehension.

17 Finding What You Need: Forms and Charts

Forms and charts organize the flow of work in many workplaces. Just as it's important to fill out forms and charts carefully, it's also important to know how to read and interpret them accurately. In this program, viewers learn how charts and forms are used in a variety of workplaces.

18 Following Directions

Whether it's fixing cranky copy machine or mixing up a batch of lawn fertilizer, good reading comprehension and listening skills can mean the difference between success and disaster in a workplace. This program explores how workplaces use diagrams and other written instructions and gives viewers reading strategies and tips to help develop these important reading skills.

19 Reading Reports and Manuals

How do you cope with the often-overwhelming amount of reading in your workplace? Memos, reports, equipment manuals, and safety procedures are all used to transmit important information throughout the worksite. This program helps viewers understand how documents like these are used in today's workplace and how reading skills like skimming and scanning can help manage these reading tasks.

MATH

20 Number Sense

How's your number sense? Like common sense, this is a valuable set of skills that helps you organize your life at home and at work. In this program viewers learn what number sense is, and how to develop it as they discover how skills like estimation can be used every day on the job in a variety of workplaces.

21 Solving Problems

Knowing how to set up a math problem to find an answer and being able to judge whether the answer makes sense are highly valued skills in any workplace. This program shows some of the strategies people use to solve problems at work. Viewers will see workers use basic operations like adding, subtracting, multiplying and dividing as well as estimation skills and the calculator to solve workplace math problems.

22 Fractions, Decimals, Percents

Many workplace math problems involve using numbers less than one---decimals, fractions and percents. Knowing how to work with these parts of wholes is a skill we use every day at work and at home. In this program, viewers learn the significance and meaning of fractions, decimals and percents, and see how they are used in a variety of workplace situations.

23 Measurements and Formulas

How much does a liter weigh compared with a quart? How accurate does the measurement of an infant's head need to be? Measurement tools and knowing how to use them effectively are the focus of this program. Viewers will see how workers use English and metric measurement systems along with typical formulas used in today's workplaces.

24 Trends and Predictions: Graphs and Data

In business today, "A picture is worth a thousand words." Graphs and data track performance of all kinds, whether it's how well a product is doing or how many sales an employee has made that week. Making sense of graphs and spreadsheets is an important skill. These program shows how data is collected, displayed, and used at work.

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