



OWRA Work Readiness Resource Level Two

For Participants

Updated March 2020

Contents

You Are Here	2
Level Two Homepage	3
Key Words and Concepts	4
Why Should I Explore My Education and Training, Skills, Interests, and Abilities?	5
Identifying Your Education and Training	6
Identifying Your Skills	8
Identifying Your Interests	10
Identifying Your Abilities	12
Reflection and Check-In	15
What are My Education and Training Options?	17
Why Should You Explore the World of Education and Work?	20
Things to Consider: Pursuing Additional Education and Training	22
Setting Employment Goals	23
Setting Your Education and Work Goals	24
Resources for Exploring the World of Work	26

Level One

In *Level One*, you will:

- Learn how to write a résumé.
- Learn about writing cover letters.
- Explore all the things you need to do to prepare for an interview.
- Create a career portfolio.
- Address barriers to employment with resources on crisis management, domestic violence support, and help for returning to work after incarceration.
- Learn how to budget and manage money.
- Learn about what employers are looking for in their employees.

You Are Here

✔ Level Two

In *Level Two*, you will:

- Identify your previous education and training experiences.
- Learn about your skills.
- Explore and identify your interests.
- Identify your abilities as they relate to the world of work.
- Look at why you should explore your interests, abilities, and skills.
- Set career goals and objectives.
- Explore work-related resources.

Level Three

In *Level Three*, you will:

- Further explore your abilities, and what you value in a work environment (work values).
- Understand and explore labor market information.
- Explore information about jobs and occupations.
- Learn about career pathways and the knowledge and skills that are similar across multiple occupations.
- Get information about jobs, training, and opportunities in your local area or state.
- Build a personal plan of education, training, and work experience opportunities.

Have you reviewed the information and tools included in Level One? If not, please visit [Level One](#) now to check out additional resources and social support tools that are designed to help you work toward economic success.

Level Two Homepage

Hello! The Work Readiness Resource **For Participants Level Two** has been created as a tool for you to explore the world of work.

In this level, you will:

-  Identify your **previous education and training**.
-  Learn about your **skills**.
-  Explore and identify your **interests**.
-  Identify your **abilities** as they relate to the world of work.
-  Look at **why** you should explore your interests, abilities, and skills.
-  **Set career goals and objectives!**

Let's get started!

Go to Next Step 

Key Words and Concepts

Throughout **Level 2**, you will find the words “job,” “occupation,” and “career” used.

A “**JOB**” refers to a paid position with specific duties, tasks, and responsibilities.

Examples of jobs include:

- An administrative assistant for a company
- A waitress at Main Street Diner
- A children’s nurse at Local Memorial Hospital

An “**OCCUPATION**” refers to a category of employment that involves similar skills and knowledge.

Examples of occupations include:

- Accountant
- Social worker
- Hotel manager
- Nurse

A “**CAREER**” is a combination of all your jobs, education, training, and work experiences that you have over your lifetime of work.

Claire knew she wanted a **career** where she could give back to the community. She eventually settled into the **occupation** of social worker, with a **job** as a child advocate for the county.

Edward spent his entire **career** in the health care industry. When he first started out he chose nursing as his **occupation**, with a **job** as an emergency room attendant at the local hospital.

Go to Next Step 



✔ Why Should I Explore My Education and Training, Skills, Interests, and Abilities?

In order to know if a specific job and career are right for you, you should first consider these questions:

- What education and training do you have? **(Education and Training)**
- What work skills do you have? **(Skills)**
- What type of work or activities interest you? What do you enjoy doing? **(Interests)**
- What are your natural abilities? What are you good at? **(Abilities)**

Exploring your education and training, skills, interests, and abilities will give you an idea of where you fit into the world of work. Exploring these will:

- Let you know what kind of jobs and careers would match your interests so you are excited to go to work;
- Help you understand how your previous jobs and work experience can help you get the job or career you are most interested in; and
- Give you a solid understanding of what skills and abilities you have to offer to your current or future employers.

You will first take a close look at the education and training you have already completed.



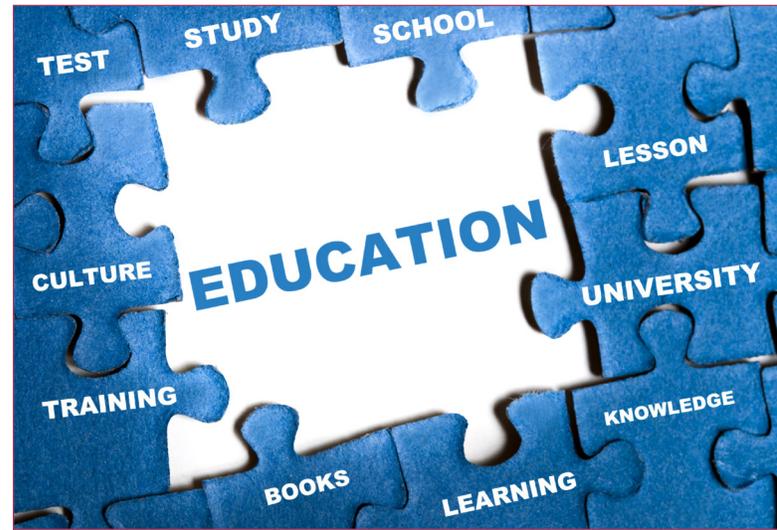
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Identifying Your Education and Training

What education and training have you had? Using the graphic on the next page, think about all the education, training, courses, etc., that you have participated in.

These might include:

- High School
- General Equivalency Degree (GED) or GED preparation courses
- Community college classes
- College or university classes
- Online classes
- Customer service classes
- Military service
- Beauty technician classes and certificates (nail technician, hairdresser, etc.)
- Trainings for certificates or licenses (to drive a truck, to operate a forklift, to work with children, etc.)
- Volunteer work



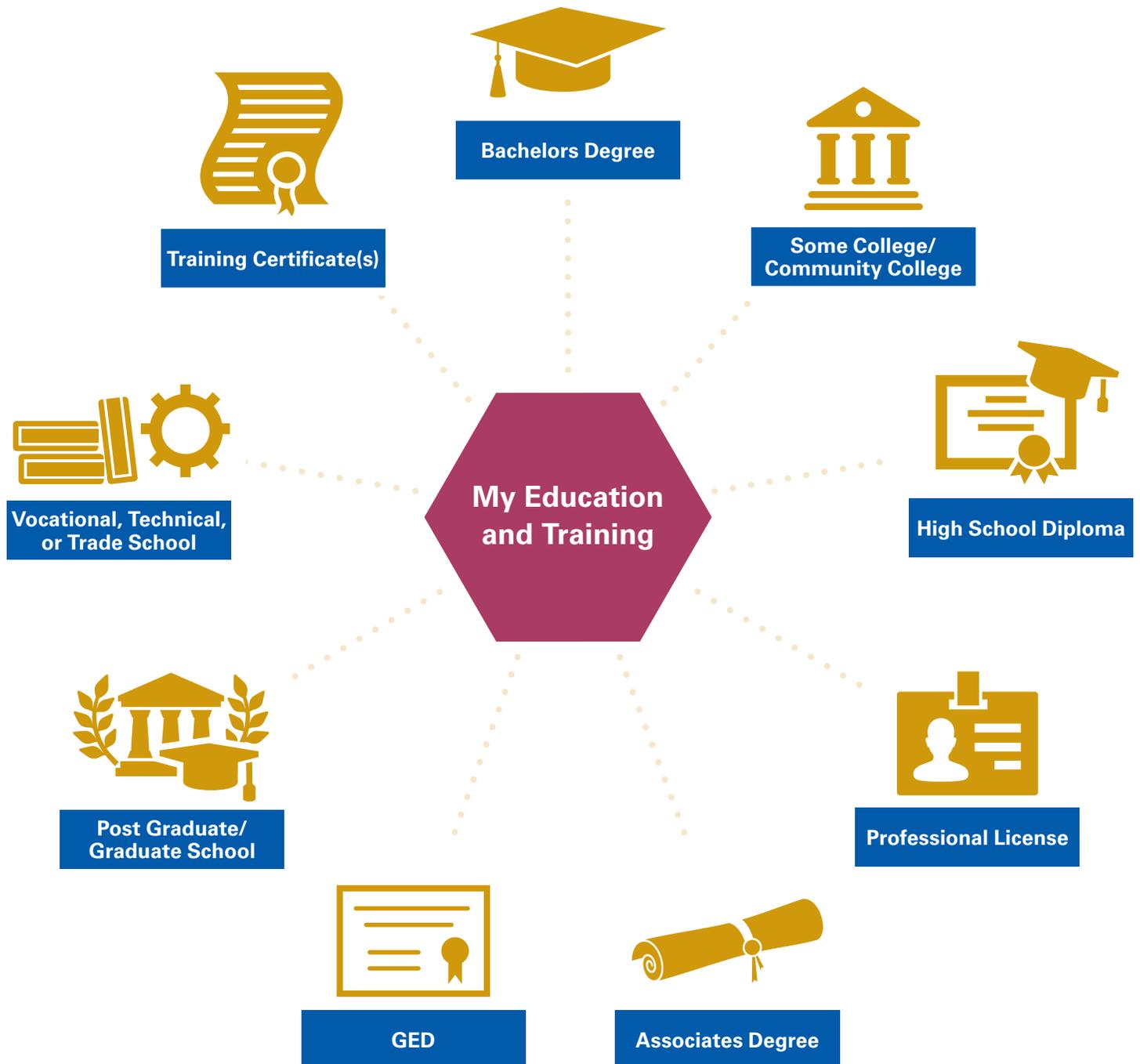
Think about all your education and training.

Complete the **TAKEAWAY** on the next page by drawing a line to connect the “My Education and Training” to all the education and training items you have completed!

You may want to print out the TAKEAWAY to keep in your Career Portfolio.

Go to Next Step 

Takeaway #1: My Education and Training



Identifying Your Skills

What are skills? How do you know what skills you have?

Skills refer to your ability to do something well. They represent the type of work you have done at previous jobs or through volunteer work. They are also things you have been trained in or learned on the job.

Some examples of skills you may have are:

- Taking care of children or adults
- Typing or using computer programs
- Answering phones
- Greeting customers
- Operating machines
- Delivering packages
- Working with animals

It is important to know what skills you have so you can let employers know during interviews!

List the skills that you have on the **TAKEAWAY** on the next page.

You may want to print out the TAKEAWAY to keep in your Career Portfolio.



Example: Skills from a Restaurant Job

Did you...

- Serve food and beverages?
- Take orders?
- Interact with customers?
- Answer phones?
- Count change or make change from a cash drawer?
- Cook?
- Seat people at tables?

These are all examples of skills that you have!

Go to Next Step 

Takeaway #2: Identifying My Skills



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Identifying Your Interests

After identifying your education, training, and skills, what is the next step?

In order to be happy at a job or in a career, you need to identify your **INTERESTS**.

Interests are activities that do you for fun or enjoy. Some examples of personal interests include:

- What you like to read.
- What TV shows and movies you like to watch.
- Events you like to attend.
- The kind of people you admire and like to be with.
- What you like to do for fun.

You may think about interests in two ways: work interests and career interests. Work interests refer to activities you like to do (like greeting people, taking care of others, and working outdoors). Career interests are more long-term - these refer to specific careers you may like (such as management, arts, construction, or sales).

To identify your work and career interests, use the [“Who R U” Career Family Survey](#), developed by Virginia Career View. The interest survey is a tool designed for you to click on career activities that you like or are interested in. The activities are arranged by career clusters, so you can begin to identify the career areas that you might like.

Connect to the survey now and follow the directions! <https://vacareerview.org/68/check-it/who-r-u/index.cfm>



Don't forget to print or write your results on the **TAKEAWAY** on the next page.

You may want to print out the TAKEAWAY to keep in your Career Portfolio.

Go to Next Step 

Takeaway #3: My Work Interests

As you can see, the survey is divided into 16 groups. Each group is called a **career cluster**. Career clusters place similar careers and occupations in groups. These clusters help you narrow the thousands of career options in the world to a general area of interest.



My Top Three Career Clusters

In which three boxes do you have the most checks? List these below.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

Be sure to print this TAKEAWAY for your Career Portfolio and keep your Top Three career clusters handy; you will learn more about career clusters in Level 3!

Identifying Your Abilities

What do you do well? What are you good at?

Abilities are the things you do well. They include your special talents and the skills you have learned from school, training, jobs, and other areas.

In the **TAKEAWAY** on the next page, think of the abilities that are listed in the chart in terms of how you compare to others. Circle the answer that best describes your abilities.

You may want to print out the TAKEAWAY to keep in your Career Portfolio.



Go to Next Step 

Takeaway #4: Identifying My Abilities

Circle the answer that best describes your abilities.

<p>Communication (Includes speech, writing, persuasion, reading, and comprehension)</p>	Below Average	Average	Above Average
<p>Math (Includes adding and subtracting)</p>	Below Average	Average	Above Average
<p>Spatial (Is the ability to understand problems involving physical spaces, shapes, or forms)</p>	Below Average	Average	Above Average
<p>Science (Includes biology, chemistry, geology, and astronomy)</p>	Below Average	Average	Above Average
<p>Leadership (Is an ability to take on responsibility in a group, to motivate others, and to provide direction in group activities)</p>	Below Average	Average	Above Average
<p>Art (Includes painting, drawing, sculpture, acting, and music)</p>	Below Average	Average	Above Average
<p>Physical Performance (Includes athletics, dance, and a variety of activities that require coordination)</p>	Below Average	Average	Above Average
<p>Mechanical (Is an ability to understand and fix various machines and appliances)</p>	Below Average	Average	Above Average

Takeaway #5: Identifying My Additional Abilities

Can you think of other abilities you have that are not listed in the chart on page 13? If so, list them in the **TAKEAWAY** below! *You may want to print out this page to keep in your Career Portfolio.*



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• _____	• _____
• _____	• _____

Reflection and Check-In

Let's review what you have done so far in this section:

- Do you better understand what **education and training** you have?
- Do you know what work **skills** you have?
- Do you have a better idea of your career **interests**?
- Do you know what **abilities** you have?

Take some time to think about these questions and record all your education and training, skills, interests, and abilities in one place on the **TAKEAWAY** on the next page.

You may want to print out the TAKEAWAY to keep in your Career Portfolio.



Go to Next Step 

Takeaway #6: Reflection

Education and Training	Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• _____• _____• _____• _____• _____• _____• _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• _____• _____• _____• _____• _____• _____• _____
Interests	Abilities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• _____• _____• _____• _____• _____• _____• _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• _____• _____• _____• _____• _____• _____• _____

Now let's begin exploring the world of education and training!

What are My Education and Training Options?

Have you thought about potential education and training options? It is great to search for jobs and occupations that match your abilities, skills, and interests, but you may need to get additional education and training to go after the jobs that interest you most.

<p>Licenses</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Licenses are sets of specific knowledge and skills that are legally required for some occupations. • Licensing requirements often vary by state. • Explore the requirements for specific occupations in your state by going to: www.careeronestop.org/toolkit/training/find-licenses.aspx
<p>Certifications</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Certifications are awards that can be earned by passing tests associated with specific occupations. • Employers expect these certifications from employees in order to demonstrate their knowledge, skills, and experience. • You can find certifications by occupation, industry, or keyword at: https://www.careeronestop.org/toolkit/training/find-certifications.aspx
<p>Short-Term Training</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • These programs allow you to earn a certificate, diploma, or award. • Short-term training programs typically take less than 2 years. • You can find short-term training opportunities at: www.careeronestop.org/toolkit/training/find-local-training.aspx
<p>Job Corps</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job Corps is a free education and training program sponsored by the United States Department of Labor. • Job Corps is for people ages 16 to 25 and helps members learn about a career, earn a high school diploma or GED, and find and keep a good job. • For more information, please visit: https://jobcorps.gov/

Job Shadowing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job shadowing involves spending time on-the-job with someone who works in a specific occupation or industry that interests you. Through job shadowing, you get to see what the job is like in a typical day and the types of tasks you would complete if employed. • You can go on a virtual job shadow by watching career videos. These career videos include descriptions of: responsibilities of the job, the work environment, and the education, skills, and other requirements needed to succeed in that job. Check out Virtual Job Shadow: www.virtualjobshadow.com
Work Experience or Internships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work experience and internships involve actually doing the job rather than merely observing. • These are often done on a volunteer basis. • Check with your caseworker or job coach for more information on internships and work experience options in your local area!
On-The-Job Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On-the-job training is typically provided by the employer at the employer’s expense. • On-the-job training can be formal or informal. • You do need to consider how long this training will last (example: 2 weeks, 3 months, etc.), the pay that will be provided, and how you may be evaluated on your job performance.
Apprenticeships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apprenticeships are a combination of on-the-job training and education in which you will learn how to do a highly skilled occupation. There are more than 800 occupations that have apprenticeships in the U.S. • Apprenticeships can last from one year (Floral Designer) to six years (Photographer). Most apprenticeships last about three or four years. • For more information on apprenticeships in your state, you can visit: www.doleta.gov/oa
YouthBuild	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YouthBuild is a program for low-income individuals ages 16-24. Participants work full-time for six to 24 months toward their GEDs or high school diplomas while learning job skills. • Participants build affordable housing in their communities and gain work experience. • For more information on YouthBuild and a directory of YouthBuild programs, you can visit: https://youthbuild.org/

Goodwill Industries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Goodwill Industries is a community-based organization with 165 locations that provides customized job training and employment placement. • Goodwill Industries provides supportive services such as English language training, additional education, or access to transportation and child care. • For more information and to find your local Goodwill, please visit: www.goodwill.org/
Community Colleges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community colleges typically offer two-year degrees (or associate of arts degrees). • The courses and degrees you receive at community colleges can typically be transferred to a four-year college or university. • You can find community colleges in your area by going to: https://www.aacc.nche.edu/college-finder/
Technical Colleges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical colleges typically offer short-term (a few months up to two years) training programs in a variety of subject areas. • The courses and associate degrees can typically be transferred to a four-year college or university. • You can find technical colleges in your area by going to: https://www.aacc.nche.edu/college-finder/
Colleges and Universities (Four-Year)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colleges and universities offer a four-year degree (Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science). • Degrees and courses are in a variety of subject areas. • For more information on different colleges and universities, ask your caseworker, job coach, or other trusted person. • You can also find four-year colleges and universities by going to: https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/ or https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/college-search

To find out more about credentials, licensures, and how military experience/training can provide you with workforce credentials, please visit: www.careeronestop.org/.

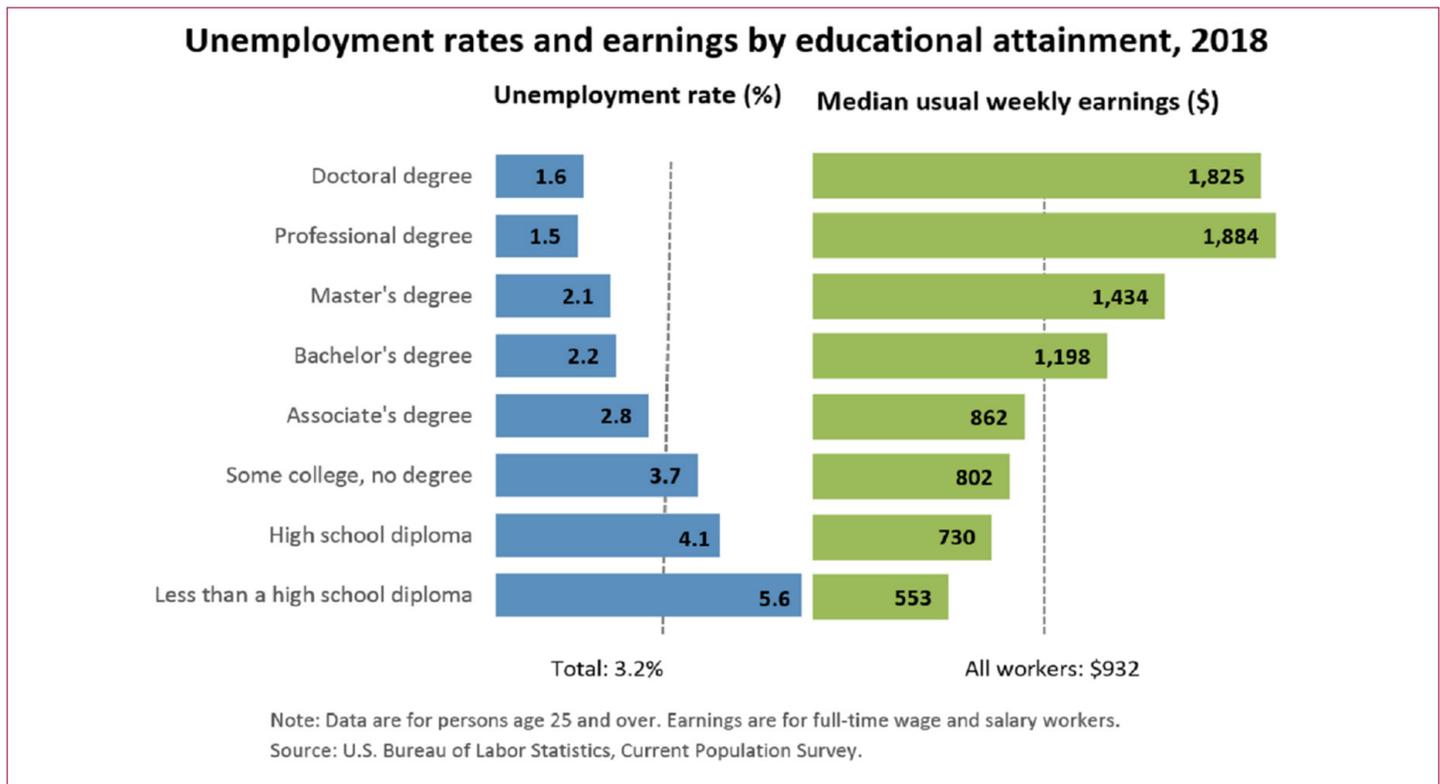
Why Should You Explore the World of Education and Work?

Why should you explore jobs, occupations, and careers?

More education means higher earnings. Typically people who have more education, training, or work experience can earn more money during their lifetime of work. Some quick facts on education and high-demand jobs and occupations are listed below. **Think about it!**

- **Fact:** Full-time workers age 25 and over with a high school diploma earn, on average, **\$177 more a week** than those without a high school diploma.
- **Fact:** As of 2019, the unemployment rate for workers aged 25 and over with a high school diploma was 3.7 percent, whereas the rate for those without a high school diploma was 5.4 percent.

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019. Retrieved from <https://www.bls.gov/cps/cpsaat07.pdf>



Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2019. Retrieved from: <https://www.bls.gov/emp/chart-unemployment-earnings-education.htm>

Fact: Health Care is one of the largest industries in the United States. Nearly one third of the fastest growing occupations nationwide are in the health care industry. The table below outlines the projected highest growing occupational groups from 2018 to 2028.

Major Occupational Group	Employment		% Change
	2018	2028	
Home Health Aides	831,800	1,136,600	36.6%
Personal Care Aides	2,421,200	3,302,100	36.4%
Software Developers, Applications	944,200	1,185,700	25.6%
Medical Assistants	686,600	841,500	22.6%
Restaurant Cooks	1,362,300	1,661,300	21.9%
Market Research Analysts and Marketing Specialists	681,900	821,100	20.4%
Taxi Drivers and Chauffeurs	370,400	442,800	19.5%
Medical and Health Services Managers	406,100	477,600	17.6%

Source: Bureau of Labor Statistics. Table 1.4: Occupations with the Most Job Growth, 2018 and Projected 2028

Check out the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Fastest Growing Occupations page at www.bls.gov/ooh/fastest-growing.htm to learn more about the top 20 fastest growing jobs or occupations projected from 2018 to 2028. The list shows that education is key; for example, 17 of the 20 fastest growing jobs require training beyond a high school degree.

Bottom line: Education and training make a difference!

Check out the statistics below.

In 2018, women age 25 or over with...

- Some high school but no diploma or GED earned an average of \$17,933;
- Only a high school diploma or GED earned an average of \$27,263 a year;
- An Associate's degree earned an average of \$37,660 a year; and
- A Bachelor's degree or more earned an average of \$64,011 a year
(U.S. Census Bureau. Historical Income Tables: P-18. Retrieved from: (<https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-income-people.html>))

In 2018, men age 25 or over with...

- Some high school but no diploma or GED earned an average of \$30,893;
- Only a high school diploma earned an average of \$45,107 a year;
- An Associate's degree earned an average of \$58,719 a year; and
- A Bachelor's degree or more earned an average of \$100,508 a year
(U.S. Census Bureau. Historical Income Tables: P-18. Retrieved from: (<https://www.census.gov/data/tables/time-series/demo/income-poverty/historical-income-people.html>)).

Go to Next Step 

Things to Consider: Pursuing Additional Education and Training

If you want to get additional education and training, you should definitely look at a few factors such as:

- Do you like studying?
- Are you willing to invest time and money into education?
- Are there education and training options that you can pursue that are free?
- What education and training do you already have? *Think back to the first activity that you completed in Level 2.*

You should also consider that you may combine these options so that they work best for your particular situation (see examples).

Example A:

You can decide to continue full-time in your current job as an administrative assistant as you pursue additional education and training to become an accountant. This will provide ongoing professional work experience, continued salary and benefits, and preparation for a new occupation.

Why would you combine education and training options? Some reasons could be:

- You don't know what career or degree you want to pursue;
- You want a more flexible work schedule;
- You have a part-time or full-time job that helps you pay the bills and you want to go to school part-time; and
- You have childcare and transportation needs that make it easier to pursue a certain type of education or training right now.

While these are challenges, remember that there are a number of services and organizations out there that want to work with you to get you on your career path!

Example B:

You can begin part-time at a community college while you continue to work to make money. Then, you can transfer after receiving enough credits to a four-year school to pursue a bachelors' degree.

Go to Next Step 

Setting Employment Goals

In order to really understand what jobs or occupations you are interested in, it is important to set an employment objective. **You cannot set out on a quest for a job by looking for just anything.** If you do, you will waste a lot of effort.

Goal setting is an important part of a successful employment search. It is critical that you take the time to establish clear goals that will help you reach your objective.

When setting goals, think about what you want from your next job (job type, wages, location, hours, benefits, etc.). Also, think about your education and training: what types of jobs align with your credentials? Finally, remember that you do not have to make this journey alone. Who do you have in your life that can help you reach your goals, such as family, friends, your case manager, or your current supervisor?

Goals should be **SMART**:

- **Specific:** Include “who,” “what,” and “where.”
- **Measurable:** Think about “how much” change you expect to achieve.
- **Achievable:** Ensure that the goal is realistic given your current situation.
- **Relevant:** Consider how the goal relates directly to your career interests and experience.
- **Time-bound:** Specify when you plan to achieve this goal by providing a specific timeframe.

It is also important to set goals in areas that could impact your success in the workforce, such as finding child care or maintaining your health.



Example Objective:

To obtain an entry-level office position where my computer skills and attention to detail may be fully utilized.

Example Goals:

I will send out 10 resumes by next Friday.
I will focus on jobs in hotel management.

Go to Next Step 

Setting Your Education and Work Goals

Use the **TAKEAWAY** on the next page to think about and record your goals for different time periods.

Remember: A goal for one month from now will be very different than six months or one year from now. You can always go back and fine tune your goals to align with your current work situation or changing interests.

You may want to print out the TAKEAWAY to keep in your Career Portfolio.



Takeaway #8: My Education and Work Goals

To set your goals, first determine your overall objective or long-term goal. What is your dream job? Where do you hope to be in five to 10 years? What do you want to achieve for your family? Then, set goals below to chart out how you plan to achieve this objective over time.

Career Objective/ Long-Term Goal:

1-3 Month(s) Goal:	
When?	
How?	
Who Can Help?	
6 Months-1 Year Goal:	
When?	
How?	
Who Can Help?	
3-5 Years Goal:	
When?	
How?	
Who Can Help?	

Resources for Exploring the World of Work

In addition to the information and takeaways provided throughout Level 2, many websites are available that provide you with information on obtaining employment, searching for jobs, and building your career.

Career OneStop – Pathways to Career Success

Summary: This website is a one-stop resource for you to utilize for job hunting and career building. The American Job Center locator allows you to find the nearest career center. Resources on career exploration, salaries, trainings, job searching, resumes, and interviews are also available on the site. State job banks, a Helpline, and additional resources are also provided.

Web Address: www.servicelocator.org/

Digital Literacy.gov

Summary: [The American Library Association](http://www.ala.org) defines digital literacy as the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills. The Digital Literacy.gov website highlights resources for exploring careers, finding a job, and creating a resume as well as career training information.

Web Address: <https://digitalliteracy.gov/resources-by-term/55>.

Veterans' Employment and Training Service (VETS)

Summary: This website provides resources and expertise to assist and prepare Veterans post September 11th to obtain meaningful careers, maximize their employment opportunities, and protect their employment rights. Resources on available grants, the Veterans Hiring Initiative, and assistance in finding employment and employment training can be found on the site.

Web Address: www.dol.gov/vets/

Child Support and Work-Oriented Child Support Programs

Summary: Many child support programs provide services to parents to help them find and keep jobs so they can remain in compliance with child support orders. Unemployed noncustodial parents currently owe the most child support. Many unemployed noncustodial parents face multiple barriers, including intermittent employment, limited education, and criminal records. Many states have addressed this issue by creating programs that may include case management, fatherhood/parenting education, and work-oriented services such as job readiness training, job search assistance, access to job developers, and job training.

Web Address: www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/css/

You have now finished Level 2! Go to Level 3! 



OWRA

Online Work Readiness Assessment