

Student name: _____ Date: _____

MODULE 19
List and explain the occupational and leadership requirements to maintain and improve employment on the job.

Objectives:

- A. Identify value limitations and describe how they affect performance on the job.**
- B. Define "natural strengths" and "personal characteristics" in relationship to employment success.**
- C. Explain how self-image is developed and its affect on job performance.**
- D. Explain how physical and mental health affect job success.**
- E. List the components of a positive attitude.**
- F. Describe management practices of effective leaders.**
- G. Explain the skills and personal qualities needed by workers in the workplace.**

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| MODULE 19: INFORMATION SHEET |
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TO THE STUDENT: Read and study this information sheet and then complete the student activities at the end of this module.

What personal characteristics are needed to maintain and improve employment?

Successfully employed people have identified their personal limitations for their jobs. It is OK to have limitations, but it is necessary to be aware of them. Also, you need to know your personal strengths and weaknesses to be able to perform successfully on the job.

Recognizing your limitations

There are many types of limitations. A limitation is defined as an attitude, or value, or physical or mental factor that works against success on the job.

Sometimes these factors can be controlled. An example of an attitude or value that may be a limiting factor in job success might be found in a person who hates cold weather, but who works as a lineman for a power company. Another example might be a vegetarian who works in a meat market. Some people learn to accept or modify these conflicts in attitudes or values; others change jobs.

Some factors, such as physical and mental limitations, cannot be overcome, but sometimes can be controlled. People with physical and mental handicaps have been trained to adjust to and succeed at specific jobs. Job skills can be developed in spite of limitations.

Too often we make the mistake of avoiding our own true feelings about the things we do. Even though we may be fully qualified for a job, we may have other limitations that will mean that the job at hand will be poorly done. Employers usually promote workers that have a positive attitude and job skills.

There are many ways to examine your attitude and determine your weaknesses. You might start by looking at your schoolwork. What subjects did you find difficult? What is your attitude about difficult subjects or firm teachers? In these situations, try to recall your feelings. As you think about them, ask yourself how well you conducted yourself as a student during these difficult times and how they changed your decision-making in the school setting.

Natural Strengths

We have all seen people who can run farther or leap higher than anyone else around them. Their "natural strengths" are obvious to everyone. For the rest of us, our natural strengths might be more subtle, but they are there. You might be very slow to get angry, or very slow to get discouraged. Therefore, when other people are emotional, you may be relied on to think clearly.

Some people develop these natural strengths to the extent that they are like a signature. Jane is the class clown; Jeff is the class scholar. You might ask yourself, "What is my 'signature'?" Or better yet, "What

is the strength that I see in myself that I would like others to see more clearly?"

These questions give you important knowledge about yourself. You will use this knowledge to learn more about you. It will give you a mental picture that you can use to improve your performance on your job.

Personal Characteristics

Individuals need to set goals for employment success. To do this you need to be sure that your general occupation and specific job match your skills, aptitudes, personality, values and interest. All of these can be called your personal characteristics. Knowing your personal characteristics will provide greater opportunity for success.

Personal characteristics, natural abilities, and readiness to do certain things are defined as a person's aptitude. Aptitude tests determine what kinds of work a person has the ability to learn. Aptitudes or personal characteristics are more than talents. They include interests that can be developed.

Some examples of personal characteristics are: neatness and organization, creativity, being good with figuring or budgeting money, liking to take things apart and put them together again, etc.

Self-Esteem

All of your personal characteristics are related to your self-esteem. When you understand that everyone has personal characteristics (some more obvious than others), you can more clearly see yourself being successful at a particular job.

Self-image is the way you see yourself. It's made up of all the things people have said about you, the way you've been treated, all the experiences you've had (bad and good), and your own personal characteristics.

How you look and feel about yourself influences how you act. As a teenager, your self-image will change constantly. This is normal because as you grow, so does your self-image. It's important to learn about your personal characteristics so that you will make choices about work that will help you become satisfied and successful. Nothing builds self-esteem like success.

What health and attitudes are needed to maintain and improve employment?

As a worker and member of a work team, you need to know that your physical and mental health affects both you and others on the job. Also, a positive attitude helps workers get along well with each other and accomplish more on the job. Job success depends upon having both good health habits and a positive attitude.

Health

There are many ways physical health affects your job performance. Simply being sick will reduce the amount of quality work you do. Sometimes a sick worker can make another worker sick, too. An example of this is having a bad cold and coughing near a fellow worker, who in turn catches your cold.

Mental health is as important as physical health. If you are depressed, it will affect your job. It will also negatively affect how others relate to you.

Health and physical fitness depend upon four basic rules:

1. Eat well-balanced, nutritious meals.
2. Get enough sleep and rest.
3. Follow a regular exercise routine.
4. Don't contaminate your body with addictive drugs or excessive alcohol.

Employers need alert, energetic workers so it is important that you follow these rules. Remember, you need play, as well as work, to stay refreshed.

Some employers are trying to help workers stay healthy. They know how poor physical and mental health affects job performance. Employers sometimes provide special programs to keep their workers physically and mentally fit. They may include exercise clubs and spas, sports tournaments, counseling services, stop-smoking groups or educational seminars.

Attitude

Developing a positive, winning attitude starts when you are quite young. Parents, teachers and friends help by being interested in you, encouraging you, praising and rewarding you, helping you learn from failures and asking you to do jobs at which you'll succeed more often than fail.

Some young people have a difficult time just because of fear and discouragement. They may get in the habit of believing that they can't do anything well. But others who learn to approach new experiences, new people, and new ideas with curiosity, enthusiasm and confidence will do more and learn more.

Two parts of a positive attitude include:

1. Seeing the opportunities, rather than the difficulties about your job.
2. Looking at the good side of things, rather than the unfairness of things.

It's been found that workers who have a good attitude will get along well with their co-workers, are happy people because they are well liked, will have greater job success, and usually will earn higher salaries than those with a poor attitude.

There are certain behaviors that you will notice about people with a positive attitude. They smile easily; they are willing to change ideas and behavior when it is appropriate; they can see the other person's point of view; they rarely complain; they admit their mistakes; they are not critical of others; they want to help others; they look directly at people when talking with them; they respect and listen to others; they don't make up excuses; they're interested in many things.

It may sound impossible. Naturally, no one is perfect! However, if you will try working on one or two of those behaviors, you will notice a change from a negative attitude to a more desirable outlook on life. You will also see that people will start to like you better and you will like them better, too. Attitude is a key to success, both at work and outside of work.

What leadership requirements are needed to maintain and improve employment?

Some workers possess certain human relations qualities that make them leaders whether or not they have a "position" or "title" after their name. Working citizens need to identify leadership qualities and different styles to be successful and promotable employees. We need leaders in the world of work. These leaders set examples and provide direction to employees.

One theory of leadership is that motivation must come from within workers who have goals to achieve. This theory is based on the following assumptions:

1. Work is a natural portion of one's life cycle.
2. People will work to accomplish goals without threats or punishment.
3. Workers feel self-fulfillment by achieving a goal and workers usually accept as well as look for responsibility.
4. Effective leaders practice good communication skills.
5. Workers feel comfortable using their imagination and creativity to solve work-related problems that they view as a challenge.

Many employees feel that some people are born to be natural leaders. Others believe that some workers have greater natural leadership ability than others. The truth is, leaders are not born. Leadership abilities are learned, developed, practiced and refined with working experience. Almost anyone can develop into an effective leader.

Managerial practices of effective leaders*

Planning and Organizing: Determining long-term objectives and strategies, allocating resources according to priorities, determining how to use personnel and resources to accomplish a task efficiently, and determining how to improve coordination, productivity, and the effectiveness of the organizational unit.

Problem Solving: Identifying work-related problems, analyzing problems in a timely but systematic manner to identify causes and find solutions, and acting decisively to implement solutions to resolve important problems or crises.

Clarifying Roles and Objectives: Assigning tasks, providing direction in how to do the work, and communicating a clear understanding of job responsibilities, task objectives, deadlines, and performance expectations.

Informing: Disseminating relevant information about decisions, plans, and activities to people that need it to do their work, providing written materials and documents, and answering requests for technical information.

Monitoring: Gathering information about work activities and external conditions affecting the work, checking on the progress and quality of the work, evaluating the performance of individuals and the organizational unit, analyzing trends, and forecasting external events.

Motivating and Inspiring: Using influence techniques that appeal to emotion or logic to generate enthusiasm for the work, commitment to task objectives, and compliance with requests for cooperation, assistance, support, or resources; setting an example of appropriate behavior.

Consulting: Checking with people before making changes that affect them, encouraging suggestions for improvement, inviting participation in decision-making and incorporating the ideas and suggestions of others in decisions.

Delegating: Allowing subordinates to have substantial responsibility and discretion in carrying out work activities, handling problems, and making important decisions.

Supporting: Acting friendly and considerate, being patient and helpful, showing sympathy and support when someone is upset or anxious, listening to complaints and problems, looking out for someone's interests.

Developing and Mentoring: Providing coaching and helpful career advice, and doing things to facilitate a person's skill acquisition, professional development, and career advancement.

Managing Conflict and Team Building: Facilitating the constructive resolution of conflict, and encouraging cooperation, teamwork, and identification with the work unit.

Networking: Socializing informally, developing contacts with people who are a source of information and support, and maintaining contacts through periodic interaction, including visits, telephone calls, correspondence, and attendance at meetings and social events.

Recognizing: Providing praise and recognition for effective performance, significant achievements, and special contributions; expressing appreciation for someone's contributions and special efforts.

Rewarding: Providing or recommending tangible rewards such as a pay increase or promotion for effective performance, significant achievements, and demonstrated competence.

(* *Definitions of the Managerial Practices*, Gary Yukl, from Leadership in Organizations, 1994, Prentice Hall.)

Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS Report)*

The SCANS report identifies the following basic skills and personal qualities needed in the workplace:

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| Resources: | Allocating time, money, materials, space and staff |
| Interpersonal Skills | Working on teams, teaching others, serving customers, leading, negotiating and working well with people from culturally diverse backgrounds |
| Information: | Acquiring and evaluating data, organizing and maintaining files, interpreting and communicating, using computers to process information |
| Systems: | Understanding social organizational and technological systems, monitoring and correcting performance and designing or improving systems |
| Technology: | Selecting equipment and tools, applying technology to specific tasks, and maintaining and troubleshooting technologies |
| Basic Skills: | Reading, writing, arithmetic and mathematics, speaking and listening |
| Thinking Skills: | Thinking creatively, making decisions, solving problems, seeing things in the mind's eye, knowing how to learn and reason |
| Personal Qualities: | Individual responsibility, self-esteem, sociability, self-management, and integrity |

** (Secretary's Commission on Achieving Needed Skills, U.S. Dept. of Labor, 1991)*

MODULE 19: STUDENT ACTIVITIES

***TO THE STUDENT:** After reading and studying the information sheet, complete the following activities.*

Activity 1: Answer the following questions:

1. Identify one of your own value limitations and describe how it might affect your performance on the job.

2. Describe "natural strengths" and "personal characteristics" as they relate to your employment success.

3. Identify one personal characteristic needed for success in each of the jobs listed below.
 - a. heavy equipment operator -
 - b. cosmetologist -
 - c. nurse assistant -
 - d. lawyer -
 - e. mail carrier -
 - f. sales person -

4. Identify one of your strongest personal characteristics and describe how it relates to your present job.

5. Explain how your self-image was developed and how it affects you on the job.

6. Explain why, in some situations, it is not a good practice to come to work when you are physically ill.

7. State three reasons why employers try to keep workers physically and mentally fit.
 - a.

 - b.

 - c.

8. List two parts of a positive attitude.
 - a.

 - b.

9. List six behavior characteristics that demonstrate a positive attitude.
 - a.

 - b.

 - c.

 - d.

 - e.

 - f.

10. Describe a time in your own life when you did not keep a positive attitude. Tell how being positive might have changed the situation.

11. Choose four of the skills and qualities listed by the SCANS Report, page 9. Describe how you must use each of these skills in your job today.
 - a.

 - b.

 - c.

 - d.

Activity 2: Complete this bonus activity.

Choose one of the management practices of an effective leader on pages 6, 7 & 8 and describe, in a complete paragraph, someone you know who demonstrates that quality.

MODULE 19: STANDARDS ADDRESSED IN THIS MODULE**Pennsylvania's Academic Standards for Career Education and Work****13.3.11. Career Retention (Keeping a Job)**

- A. Analyze work habits needed to advance within a career.
- B. Evaluate conflict resolution skills:
 - Constructive criticism
 - Group dynamics
 - Managing
 - Mediation
 - Negotiation
 - Problem solving

Pennsylvania's Academic Standards for Reading, Writing, Speaking and Listening (RWSL)**1.1.11. Learning to Read Independently**

- E. Establish a reading vocabulary by identifying and correctly using new words acquired through the study of their relationships to other words. Use a dictionary or related reference.

1.4.11. Types of Writing

- C. Write persuasive pieces.
 - Include a clearly stated position or opinion.
 - Include convincing, elaborated and properly cited evidence.
 - Develop reader interest.
 - Anticipate and counter reader concerns and arguments.
 - Include a variety of methods to advance the argument or position.

1.5.11. Quality of Writing

- A. Write with a sharp, distinct focus.
 - Identify topic, task and audience.
 - Establish and maintain a single point of view.

- B. Write using well-developed content appropriate for the topic.
- Gather, determine validity and reliability of, analyze and organize information.
 - Employ the most effective format for purpose and audience.
 - Write fully developed paragraphs that have details and information specific to the topic and relevant to the focus.
- F. Edit writing using the conventions of language.
- Spell all words correctly.
 - Use capital letters correctly.
 - Punctuate correctly (periods, exclamation points, question marks, commas, quotation marks, apostrophes, colons, semicolons, parentheses, hyphens, brackets, ellipses).
 - Use nouns, pronouns, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, conjunctions, prepositions and interjections properly.
 - Use complete sentences (simple, compound, complex, declarative, interrogative, exclamatory and imperative).

Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS)

PERSONAL QUALITIES

Self-Esteem: Believes in own self-worth and maintains a positive view.

Self-Management: Assesses own knowledge, skills, and abilities accurately; sets well-defined and realistic personal goals; self-starter.

COMPETENCIES

Information: Acquires and uses information orally and in writing, as the need arises.