

# Career Information & Exploration

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### Lesson Plans

**Lesson Plans** focus on career development competencies in areas of self-knowledge and career planning, occupational and education exploration, and job search. Each Lesson Plan contains five sections that correspond with the National Career Development Guidelines, as well as links to career-based articles. Lesson plans are specifically designed to assist career professionals with students and clients in the career exploration process.

The five sections are broken down into:

1. **Focus & Review** ~ states the focus of the lesson plan and highlights the review process.
2. **Statement of Objectives** ~ states the objectives the participant is to learn.
3. **Teacher Input** ~ outlines ways to instruct participants in completing the activity.
4. **Guided Practice** ~ highlights discussion points for groups.
5. **Closure** ~ states suggestions for completion of activity.



In some instances, **Technology Connections** are provided. These connections are just one more way for facilitators to link new technology to the lesson plan. Just look for the technology icon!

### Activities & Worksheets

**Worksheets** are pre-made career development activities for students and clients to further explore careers and interests. Activity answers will vary depending on participants' self assessments and answers to questions about individual interests.

By completing activities, participants are actively engaged in seeking out career resources. This assists in better acquainting individuals with the tools and resources available to them.



This logo represents *MnCareers*-produced activities. Please feel free to adapt these exercises according to your needs.

**ARTICLES:** *MnCareers* – all articles.

## 1. FOCUS AND REVIEW

- Use *MnCareers* to demonstrate to participants:
  1. The availability of career information.
  2. The connection between education and career goals.
  3. How occupations are classified for easy retrieval of information.

## 2. STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

- Participants will understand the relationship between education and work.
- Participants will learn how to locate, evaluate and interpret career information.
- Participants will learn methods of classifying occupations.

## 3. TEACHER INPUT

- Ask participants in a large or in small groups to list 25-30 occupations they know of. Write these on the chalk board or paper.
- Define career fields as an organizational system of classifying careers. Discuss how clustering occupations can aid in career research. Return to the list of careers and discuss different ways the careers could be clustered.
- Instruct the class to find a career field from *MnCareers* that is of interest to them.

## 4. GUIDED PRACTICE

- Briefly discuss what information is in the occupational headings of *MnCareers* occupations, work definitions, interest profiles, wages, education and job outlook.
- Discuss education requirements for various occupations.

## 5. CLOSURE

- Inform students where further career information and resources are located (many national and Minnesota-specific resources are listed in *MnCareers*). Also discuss with students about the role of technology and the Internet in career information and encourage them to locate information online to share at a later time.



Technology  
Connections:

Encourage students to use the latest electronic tools found on:  
 CareerOneStop ([www.careeronestop.org](http://www.careeronestop.org))  
 ISEEK ([www.iseek.org](http://www.iseek.org))  
 MCIS (license required: <http://mncis.intocareers.org>)  
 e-folio Minnesota ([www.efoliominnesota.com](http://www.efoliominnesota.com))

Adapted from:

***Career Choices in North Carolina, 2003 Career Development and User's Guide, Youth edition***  
 [State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee]

# LESSON PLAN: CAREER DECISION-MAKING

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**ARTICLES:** 7 Steps to Decision-Making (*Facilitator Guide* pg. 12)  
Career Decision-Making (*Facilitator Guide* pg. 52)  
Career Planning Myths (*Facilitator Guide* pg. 54)  
Educational Planning Myths (*Facilitator Guide* pg. 136)

## 1. FOCUS AND REVIEW

- Present decision-making as:
  1. A necessary skill to be developed before leaving high school.
  2. Something that is individual and unique.

## 2. STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

- Participants will identify the seven steps to decision-making.
- Participants will apply this model to everyday decision-making as it relates to career decisions.

## 3. TEACHER INPUT

- Plan an activity that requires students to set goals. Re-visit that goal during various times in the semester to determine whether the goal is still important and if appropriate time has been dedicated to its completion.
- Set short-term goals for the students to experience the goal-setting process.

## 4. GUIDED PRACTICE

- Discuss both Career and Educational Planning Myths. Have each student learn the seven steps to decision-making as they apply to ordinary, everyday events, and how they apply to career decision-making.

## 5. CLOSURE

- Encourage students who have difficulty with decisions to talk with a school counselor for further assistance. Often poor decision-making is more than the lack of a model to follow and can be a warning of poor self-esteem. Many students require lots of assistance with college and career decisions while others are able to move quickly through the process. Keep this lesson positive with information on how to seek further assistance at your school with quality state career resources. (see resources on iSeek Solutions, MCIS, ISEEK, MOHE, etc)

Adapted from:

***Career Choices in North Carolina, 2005-2006 Career Development and User's Guide, Youth edition***  
[State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee]

# LESSON PLAN: NONTRADITIONAL CAREERS

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**ARTICLES:** Career Profiles found in *MnCareers* (*MnCareers* pgs. 24-96);  
Nontraditional Employment (*MnCareers* pgs. 13).  
Budgeting Basics (Worksheet #38, page 175)  
Create a Personal Budget (Worksheet #39, page 177)

## 1. FOCUS AND REVIEW

- Define nontraditional careers.
- Divide participants into groups. Have each group create two lists: Nontraditional careers for women and nontraditional careers for men.
- Discuss factors that might have impacted their list choices.

## 2. STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVES

- Participants will access career development resources.
- Participants will use labor market information.
- Participants will consider nontraditional career opportunities.

## 3. TEACHER INPUT

- Review Monthly Budget exercise with students (Worksheets #38 and 39).
- Review Career Profiles found in *MnCareers* (pgs. 24-96).
- Highlight profiles of nontraditional occupations for men and women.
- Review labor market trends such as growing or shrinking occupations at: [www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi](http://www.deed.state.mn.us/lmi)

## 4. GUIDED PRACTICE

- Select an example of a nontraditional career for a male and a female. Create a chart for the group identifying the education and salary level for each.
- Have each group create a chart and answer the following questions:
  1. How do the educational requirements differ between jobs traditionally for men or women?
  2. How do salary levels differ between nontraditional careers for men and women?
  3. Which nontraditional career(s) does each member of the group find personally interesting?

## 5. CLOSURE

- Have each group report their findings.

Adapted from:

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[State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee]

# WORKSHEET # 14: CAREER RESEARCH

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Directions: Use information in *MnCareers* and additional resources to answer these questions about a career of your choice.

**Title of Occupation:** \_\_\_\_\_

1. Description of the occupation including main duties and responsibilities.

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2. What are the education and training requirements for the occupation?

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3. List other required qualifications such as licensing, certifications, etc.

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4. What is the average wage or salary for this occupation?

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5. What is the employment outlook for this occupation?

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6. List the places and work environments where people in this occupation might work.

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7. What are the opportunities for advancement?

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8. List other occupations that are similar or related.

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## WORKSHEET # 14, CONTINUED

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9. Is this occupation available in your area? List companies or other places of employment in your area in which this occupation is located.

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10. What school subjects or courses would help you to prepare for this occupation?

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11. Does this occupation deal mainly with people, data, things or ideas?

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12. Do you think you have the aptitude (potential ability) for this occupation?

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13. This occupation interests you because:

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14. List three resources (books, magazines, computerized information, etc.) used for this research.

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15. List the name and title of a person(s) that helped you locate this information.

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16. List the name of a person(s) you know (or know of) who is in this occupation.

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Adapted from:

***Career Choices in North Carolina, 2005-2006 Career Development and User's Guide, Youth edition***  
[State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee]

# **WORKSHEET # 15: CAREER INFORMATIONAL INTERVIEW**

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**Directions:** Select someone working in an interesting occupation to interview in person or on the phone. Spend at least 20 minutes talking with the individual and gathering information about his or her career and the occupation. Suggested questions are listed below. You can add questions related to your interests and concerns.

1. How long have you worked in this occupation?
2. What other occupations did you work previously?
3. Do you primarily work with people, data, things or ideas?
4. What do you like most about your job?
5. How did you get started in this line of work?
6. What personal qualities do you feel are needed to succeed in this line of work?
7. What type of training is needed for this occupation today?
8. What changes in your occupation have you seen occur?
9. What are the most frequently recurring problems on your job?
10. What type of technology do you use? (computer hardware, software, etc.)
- 11.
- 12.
- 13.
- 14.
- 15.

**Be sure to keep answers in your career portfolio.**

Adapted from:

***Career Choices in North Carolina, 2005-2006 Career Development and User's Guide, Youth edition***  
[State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee]

## ACTIVITY # 16: SKILLS SCAVENGER HUNT

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Do you know that workers use the same skills on their jobs as you do in school?

**Directions:** Select someone who has had a job for a few years to interview. Ask them the following questions concerning skills they use on their job:



1. What's your job title?
2. What kinds of things do you read at work?
3. What kind of writing do you do?
4. Do you communicate by speaking and listening?
5. What kinds of mathematics are used on your job?
6. Does your company have customers or work with people in different counties, cities, states or countries? Examples?
7. How are major decisions made in your department? Examples:
8. Are you a problem solver at work? Could you give an example please?
9. What technology do you use to accomplish your job?
10. What machines do you operate on your job?
11. Do you teach others as part of your job?
12. Are you trained in other jobs at the same worksite?
13. Where did you learn the skills needed for your job?



### FOLLOW UP ACTIVITY

Combine the results of all the students' interviews into a master list for display. Make one list for each question and title each sheet with the skill. List the examples the various people told the students.

**\*Note for teachers:** The objective is for students to explore skills (rather than occupations) on a field trip or shadowing experience.

Adapted from:

***Career Choices in North Carolina, 2005-2006 Career Development and User's Guide, Youth edition***  
[State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee]

# WORKSHEET # 17: CAREER PLANNING LIST

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Directions: Check the things that you have completed in your career-planning process.

## HAVE YOU:

- Taken an interest assessment or inventory?
- Taken an aptitude or abilities test?
- Used a computerized career information system?
- Used or checked on books about careers at your school or library?
- Interviewed someone in an occupation of interest to you?
- Attended a Job Fair or Career Day in your school or community?
- Talked to college admissions representatives?
- Talked to military recruiters?
- Looked at college catalogs?
- Reviewed career and college plans with your family?
- Completed a career shadowing program?
- Discussed your career or college plans with a school/career counselor or advisor?
- Prepared a resume?
- Visited schools you are interested in attending?



Look at your list. What things do you still need to accomplish?

Make plans to do these when appropriate. High school students can use the Junior & Senior Timelines (*Facilitator Guide* pgs. 137-138) to help stay on task and organized.

Adapted from:  
***Career Choices in North Carolina, 2005-2006 Career Development and User's Guide, Youth edition***  
[State Occupational Information Coordinating Committee]

## WORKSHEET # 17 CONTINUED

The following is a list of career planning activities. Some of them you might have already work on, while others you are just starting. Place a check (✓) next to an activity you've accomplished and summarize what you learned. Choose five activities you have not completed. Use *MnCareers* and other resources to determine how you can begin to work on each activity. Be sure to add this information to your portfolio.

**(✓) when completed**

<b>Took an interest assessment or inventory</b>	<b>Took an aptitude or abilities test</b>
What I learned:	What I learned:
<b>Used a computerized system to research occupations &amp; schools (like ISEEK or MCIS)</b>	<b>Informally interviewed someone in an occupation I find interesting</b>
What I learned:	What I learned:
<b>Checked out and read books on careers</b>	<b>Attended a job fair or career day</b>
What I learned:	What I learned:
<b>Talked to a college admissions representative</b>	<b>Reviewed career and educational plan with parents or mentor</b>
What I learned:	What I learned:
<b>Talked to a military recruiter</b>	<b>Browsed catalogs from higher education institutions</b>
What I learned:	What I learned:

## WORKSHEET #17, CONTINUED

Completed a job shadowing program	Prepared a resume
What I learned:	What I learned:
Discussed career and educational plans with a school counselor or advisor	Used the Internet to search for career and educational resources
What I learned:	What I learned:
Explored different forms of financial aid	Researched different scholarships and grants to help pay for college
What I learned:	What I learned:
Visited schools I'm interested in attending	Interned at an interesting company
What I learned:	What I learned:
What I learned:	What I learned:

Use this list and **expand** on your ideas throughout the year. Make sure to check each activity box after completing it and document what you learned. Fill in the two blank spaces with additional career-planning activities not already on the list.

# WORKSHEET # 18: WHERE ARE THE JOBS?

Use *MnCareers* to find answers to the questions below.

- Using the table on page 10 in *MnCareers*, fill in the grid below. In the first column, select six occupations with a high growth rate. In the second column, list the employment numbers. Next, list growth rate and the median hourly wage.

Occupation with High Growth Rate	Employment Numbers	Growth Rate	Median Hourly Wage
		%	
		%	
		%	
		%	
		%	
		%	

- Categorize the job titles for Minnesota's **shrinking occupations** from page 10 into the correct career clusters (Agriculture, Communications, Business, Education, Finance, Government, Health Science, Hospitality, Human Services, Information Technology, Law and Public Safety, Manufacturing, Marketing and Sales, Science and Technology, Transportation). Use MCIS or ISEEK for occupations not listed in *MnCareers*.


- Based on the table in question 2, which career fields contain the **most** shrinking occupations? Which fields have fewer expected losses? Give at least one example of why you think these fields are changing.


## WORKSHEET #18, CONTINUED

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4. According to page 8 of *MnCareers*, what are the "real" odds of getting hired as a pro athlete? What do these odds tell you about popular occupations in general?

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5. Many occupations in Minnesota have a large number of openings available right now. See page 11 in *MnCareers* and list six occupations with many openings.

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6. Why should you be interested in occupations with high vacancies when considering a career?

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# WORKSHEET # 19: WHO'S THE CAREER COUNSELOR?

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Participants, prepare for the ultimate role-play exercise in career exploration ...

## Students as Career Counselors

### Congratulations!

As of right now, you're a high school career counselor. Students come to you with their hopes and dreams. Your job is to help them turn those dreams into reality. Sometimes that means recommending schools for post-secondary education or training in a specific area. Other times, it means showing individuals how to apply for financial aid. Some of your students don't have a clue what they want to do after high school, and it's your job to help figure it out. The principal (your boss) believes that all students have to have some idea of what they will do following graduation. "Our kids are good kids, and they all need goals," he said at a recent staff meeting. "Help them get some," he said, while looking right at you.

### Your Task:

Counseling sessions with your students begin tomorrow at 9 a.m. sharp. Your boss promised parents that as a counselor, you're responsible for the development of four career and education options for each student. To do your job well, you'll need to:

- Get acquainted with career-planning resources on the Internet
- Meet each of your advisees and evaluate some basic information about him or her
- Fill out a form for each advisee in which you develop four possible career paths and appropriate education options for him or her

**\*Note:** As a counselor at a large high school, you have *many* students to advise, so you'll have to learn quickly.

### Potential Resources:

The Internet has numerous college and career-planning resources. It would be a good idea for you to familiarize yourself with some of the ones listed in *2008 MnCareers*. Other resources include the activities in the online *MnCareers Facilitators Guide*; MCIS Web site; ISEEK.org; Minnesota Office of Higher Education; and CareerOneStop.org, just to name a few.

When using Internet sites, be sure to remember the URLs and note which information you obtained from which sites so that you can refer to them when talking with your advisees.

# WORKSHEET # 19, CONTINUED

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## The Process:

Counseling season has begun! The students are waiting outside the counseling office in four lines. The head counselor will tell you which students are yours. After meeting with individual students, answer these questions:

1. Does the student know what he or she wants to do after graduation?
2. If the student has a goal, is it realistic given the student's academic history?
3. If the goal is realistic, what should the student do next?
4. If the goal isn't realistic, what alternative career paths can you suggest that might be appropriate? (Example: The student wants to be a doctor but does not have good grades in science courses. What other options are available? Are other science or medical fields appealing? What about other careers where the student can help people?)
5. If the student doesn't know what he or she wants to do, how can you help with life direction?
6. What steps should the student take at this point in his or her career to help insure a successful future?

## Written Recommendations:

Your final task is to write up a recommendation report for each of your advisees. Be sure to explain *why* you've chosen the options you have (for example, is it because of their academic record, personality traits, abilities, etc.?). At the end of your report, name three Web sources you found to be the most valuable in reaching your professional conclusions and why. Then be prepared to present your report orally to your peers what you advised and why. It's also a good idea to jot down notes as to anything you would do differently the next time around (spend more or less time one-on-one with students, give students different assessments, research additional materials in a particular subject, etc).

**\*Remember:** Faculty occasionally meet around the water cooler or lunch table to generate or exchange ideas and information. (It's OK to exchange resource ideas with other career counselors, but not gossip about your advisee's low skill level or blue hair.)

## Job Performance = Evaluation:

Just like any other activity or project, you'll be evaluated on how well you did (similar to a job performance review). Most likely your instructor will base your performance on the thoroughness and creativity of the career options or school choices you suggested for your advisee. Your responses as to *why* you made the recommendations you did are equally important.

## What You Will Have Learned:

Aside from developing career options for your "students," you will now be more aware of:

- The need to develop some goals and plans for your life.
- An understanding of academic achievement and career options available.
- The latest career planning information resources available online.

Adapted from:

**FutureQuest:** [www.pvpusd.k12.ca.us/teachweb/twidwell/FutureQuest.html](http://www.pvpusd.k12.ca.us/teachweb/twidwell/FutureQuest.html)

## WORKSHEET #20: NONTRADITIONAL EMPLOYMENT

Below is a list of examples of nontraditional occupations for men and women. Using *MnCareers*, locate the median hourly wage and the number of people who are currently employed in each occupation.

WOMEN			MEN		
Nontraditional Occupation	Median Wage	Current Employment	Nontraditional Occupation	Median Wage	Current Employment
Architect			Bank Teller		
Auto Body Repairer			Bill & Account Collectors		
Bricklayer / Stone Mason			Child Care Worker		
Civil Engineer			Dietician		
Clergy			Social Worker		
Computer Support Specialist			Librarian		
Data Communications Analyst			Licensed Practical Nurse		
Dentist			Manicurist		
Drafter			Medical Assistant		
Electrician			Occupational Therapist		
Firefighter			Paralegal		
Painter			Personal & Home Care Aide		
Surveying & Mapping Technician			Registered Nurse		
Tile Setter			Special Ed Teacher		
Welder & Solderer			Veterinary Assistant		

1. How do the median hourly wages compare for men and women?

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2. What are the advantages and disadvantages of nontraditional work?  
(Visit ISEEK for help: [www.iseek.org/sv/10124.jsp](http://www.iseek.org/sv/10124.jsp))

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3. Which of the above nontraditional occupations interest you? Why?

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## WORKSHEET #21: JOB PROSPECTS

Find each career field in *MnCareers*. Locate the job within each career field that has the highest employment figure and write the job title below. Circle the description that best describes the job outlook for that occupation.

Job Title	Career Field	Job Outlook	
	<b>Agriculture, Food &amp; Natural Resources</b>	Caution Fair	Good Very Good Excellent
	<b>Architecture &amp; Construction</b>	Caution Fair	Good Very Good Excellent
	<b>Arts, A/V Technology &amp; Communications</b>	Caution Fair	Good Very Good Excellent
	<b>Business, Management &amp; Administration</b>	Caution Fair	Good Very Good Excellent
	<b>Education &amp; Training</b>	Caution Fair	Good Very Good Excellent
	<b>Finance</b>	Caution Fair	Good Very Good Excellent
	<b>Government &amp; Public Administration</b>	Caution Fair	Good Very Good Excellent
	<b>Health Science</b>	Caution Fair	Good Very Good Excellent
	<b>Hospitality &amp; tourism</b>	Caution Fair	Good Very Good Excellent
	<b>Human Services</b>	Caution Fair	Good Very Good Excellent
	<b>Information Technology</b>	Caution Fair	Good Very Good Excellent
	<b>Law, Public Safety &amp; Security</b>	Caution Fair	Good Very Good Excellent
	<b>Manufacturing</b>	Caution Fair	Good Very Good Excellent
	<b>Marketing, Sales &amp; Service</b>	Caution Fair	Good Very Good Excellent

## WORKSHEET #21, CONTINUED

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	<b>Science, Technology, Engineering &amp; Mathematics</b>	Caution Fair	Good Very Good Excellent
	<b>Transportation, Distribution &amp; Logistics</b>	Caution Fair	Good Very Good Excellent

1. Based on the information in the table above, which occupations have the best job prospects? Which are the worst?

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2. What are some reasons **why** you would consider these jobs? What are some reasons why you **wouldn't** consider them?

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3. Does an occupation with a strong outlook **always** mean it has good job prospects? Why or why not?

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## WORKSHEET #22: ALTERNATIVE RESOURCES

Although *MnCareers* has a ton of information about careers and your future options, it is only a starting point on your journey. There are thousands of other great resources out there. *MnCareers* includes several pages that highlight some alternative resources available. Use the resource pages to complete the following activity below.

1. Choose one of the resource pages in *MnCareers*, like the "How to Job Search" page (found on page 117). Find another resource page of interest to you in *MnCareers* and record it below.

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2. For the topic you've chosen, read through all the resources listed. Choose one resource you would like to explore further. List the resource below and summarize what you expect to learn from it.

Resource:

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What I expect to learn:

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3. List three questions had about this topic that haven't been answered by *MnCareers*.

1.

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2.

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3.

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4. Locate and use your chosen resource. How did you find or contact this resource?

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## WORKSHEET #22, CONTINUED

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5. Were your questions answered? Why or why not?

Yes     No

Why or Why not:

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6. What new questions did using this resource make you think of? Were you able to answer these questions with your resource? Did this resource point you to other useful resources on this topic? Which ones?

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7. *MnCareers* is in need of one more resource for your topic and you are the authority for locating it. The resource can be a book, agency, Web site or anything. Record the resource below. Include a title, description, and how or where to find this great new resource.

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## WORKSHEET #23: DO I HAVE THE SKILLS?

You've looked at a lot of different occupations in *MnCareers*. You've probably even started to pick out different careers that sound interesting. Do you have the skills that are needed for these occupations? Do you know all the skills needed for the occupation?

*MnCareers* has skill information for each career cluster. (For example, skills information for Information Technology is found on page 73 under "What Skills Do You Need?") Use this skill information to complete the activity below, using the following steps:

1. Think of three different career clusters you find interesting (like Manufacturing or Law, Public Safety and Security). Record each career cluster, one in each of the tables on this page and page 86.
2. Summarize the necessary skills for each in the "Skill" column.
3. Indicate whether or not you have this skill by circling YES or NO in the "Have skill?" column.
4. If you have the skill already, explain how you acquired it. If you don't have it, explain how you could develop or gain this skill.

<b>Occupational Group:</b>			
<b>Skill</b>	<b>Have skill?</b>	<b>How did you gain this skill?</b>	<b>How could you develop this skill?</b>
	Yes No		
	Yes No		
	Yes No		
	Yes No		

## WORKSHEET #23, CONTINUED

Occupational Group:			
Skill	Have skill?	How did you gain this skill?	How could you develop this skill?
	Yes No		
	Yes No		
	Yes No		
	Yes No		

Occupational Group:			
Skill	Have skill?	How did you gain this skill?	How could you develop this skill?
	Yes No		
	Yes No		
	Yes No		
	Yes No		