

**Vocational Awareness
Course Curriculum
King Philip Regional High School
Rev. 8/11/2016**

This Vocational Awareness course is designed to assist students with identifying a path toward employment, through the understanding of their vocational preferences, skills and abilities. This curriculum provides an intensive vocational exploration and experiential learning. The ultimate goal of this course is to assist students with obtaining integrated, community-based vocational opportunities in their areas of choice. Self-determination skills such as decision-making, choice, self-awareness, and self-advocacy in career decision-making will be emphasized, while teaching students job-search, goal setting, résumé/portfolio development, and interviewing skills. Topics may be omitted and shifted accordingly, based on the group composition and needs, with priority given to those topics that would likely assist students with obtaining more immediate work and/or post secondary educational/training experiences.

Each title embolden in **{Brackets}** indicates that the worksheet, activity or resource is available on the OneDrive for use with students. Reminders of homework assignments and support for completing applications, career exploration activities, etc. will be provided within the classroom throughout the week. Additionally, students will be exposed to a number of vocational opportunities through job and postsecondary educational tours, informational interviews and job placements.

Each student will develop and maintain a binder of career exploration materials, one section of which will be reserved for their employment portfolio. Required outputs of the course, which will be maintained in each student's employment binder include:

- 1) A summary of the career interest survey
- 2) A print out of career research (e.g. job description; required skills and training levels; job demand; job tasks; salary information, etc.) pertaining to the students area of interest
- 3) An updated resume that includes a clear career and/or job goal
- 4) References
- 5) Interview skills checklist
- 6) A completed job application which can be used as a template
- 7) A job search log

Week I: Introductions and Orientation to Course

1. Orientation to course goals of community employment preparation and experiences. Overview of topics to be discussed.
2. Each student introduces themselves, using professional behavior and language.
 - a. Activity: **{Form: Think Positively}**
 - b. Review: **{How to Describe Yourself 180 words}**
 - c. Activity: Conduct in groups of 2 or as a whole. One person interviews the other and takes notes on responses. 1. What was your favorite job or responsibility and why? 2. What was your worst job or responsibility and why? Interviewee reports back to the group about their partner. Leader promotes learning from experiences and who we are as workers. **{Form: Best/Worst Job}**
3. Establish/set up Employment Binders, where all documents will be kept. One section labeled: Employment Portfolio **{Form: Employment Portfolio Outline}**
4. Discuss Employment Portfolios as a compilation of accomplishments, pictures of task competence, letters of recommendation, etc.

Week II: Work Behaviors

Participants will learn positive work behaviors and soft skills and understand the relationship between current behaviors and employment success. School-based time and home assessments will offer the opportunity for feedback on time management, follow-through, how one responds to supervision, initiative, etc. Improvement of work behaviors throughout the course will be identified.

1. What are work behaviors? Actions that help us to get and keep a job. For example, being on time, receiving feedback/supervision, getting along with others, showing initiative, completing tasks, organizational skills, etc.
2. Description of a good employee
 - a. Soft skills: social skills; interpersonal; time management, etc.
 - b. Hard skills: skills that it takes to do a certain job
3. Resolving conflict in the workplace. Present the hierarchy of dealing with problems (talk first with the individual/coworker; try again; then go to the boss). Provide common workplace conflicts and role play or discuss problem-solving using decision-making framework – identify the problem, come up with 2 or more solutions, identify the consequences of each choice. Discuss the body language and tone used. Discuss the ‘sandwich approach’ to resolving difficulties.

Optional Activity: Watch **{Workplace Etiquette Videos}**

Activity: Teacher works with each student to identify tasks/responsibilities they will take on from a list of options (e.g. work on resume, do homework or home task). Review skills checklists and both teacher and student complete daily until the next Vocational Awareness class. **{Form: Task Behaviors Checklist}**

Week III. Exploring Interests and Abilities

Finding the right job is based on knowing what you like and don't like.

1. Discuss the definitions of:
 - a. Ability: what you can/are able to do (with accommodations as needed);
 - b. Skills: behaviors that you are good at. Skills are learned.
 - c. Interests: what you like to do. Just because you CAN do it doesn't mean you LIKE to do it. Offer examples and elicit examples from the group.
2. Activity: Students go to the O*Net Interest Profiler: www.mynextmove.org to complete the Interest Profiler (tell us what you like). No ‘unsure’ answers permitted. Continue on to identify continued training/education levels (Job Zone), then write name at top to print out Interest Profiler results from O*Net (RISEARC numbers and career list).
3. Activity: **{Form: Finding the Right Job}**

Week IV: Career Exploration

This class is design to open up employment options and ideas. Some participants may not have had many opportunities/experiences with regard to employment.

1. What do family members/neighbors/others do for work? What tasks are involved? What are some other jobs in the community that interest participants?
2. Based on information from previous interest assessment(s) (i.e. O*Net results), review participants' interests, skills and specific job tasks that they enjoy. What types of jobs and environments might be a good match?
 - a. Activity: Each student identifies a job from their stated interests or O*Net for further exploration, based on their identified interests. Identify questions that will help with career decision-making. Based on information learned thus far regarding job seekers' areas of interest, visit:

3. Use O*Net : <http://online.onetcenter.org/>: to research that particular job. At bottom of page for that specific occupation, go to State Trends, identify state and link to careerinfonet.org to watch videos of occupations of interest.

Optional Activity: explore additional **{Helpful Career Exploration Websites}**

Homework: Interview 2 people to learn about the a) training, b) tasks and 3) responsibilities of their jobs; and/or use O*Net Online to get information about 2 more jobs of interest.

Week V: Presenting yourself on paper

1. Follow up from previous lesson: Students provide information on their previous experiences with Career Exploration
 - a. What method did you use to learn about the job?
 - b. Share with the group about specific tasks of the job.
 - c. How does this match (or not) with the tasks and interests you have expressed so far?

Now, students will learn the various components of a resume, how to complete applications, and develop portfolios.

1. Discuss the various ways of presenting yourself to an employer.
 - a. Applications: submitted to employers to express interest in a job.
 - b. Portfolios: used during interviews to highlight accomplishments, competence, and skills.
 - c. Resumes: identify specific experiences and skills that can meet employer needs.
2. Focus on Resumes:
 - a. Discuss when and why resumes are used.
 - b. Discuss the sections and types of information provided on a resume
 - c. Discuss the different types of resumes using the article **{Chronological or Functional Resume}**.
Provide examples of each **{Forms: sample chronological AND sample functional resume}**

Activity: Complete sections of resume. **{Form: How to Write a Resume}** Compile lists of information needed to further support the development of each participant's resume.

Activity: Students create their resumes, email to their homes, save to flash drive, and print copies for their employment binders.

3. Focus on Applications and Portfolios

Activity: Students request job application from teacher as if addressing an employer of interest.

Complete sections of actual (or sample) job application **{Forms: Application Tips AND Job Application}**

Activity: compile work-related information in portfolio section of binder

Homework: bring in pictures, certificates, awards, or other accomplishments that convey competence of tasks/activities to be added to portfolio.

Week VI: Postsecondary Education

There are many paths to career success and many ways of getting the training and education you need for a job. Technical Schools, on-the-job training, apprenticeships, and college are some examples.

1. Provide specific local examples of each type of training option
2. Discuss that each student's path must be individually determined, based on career goals, learning styles, resources, and preference.
3. Discuss **{Differences between High School and College}**. Be clear that colleges do not have to provide accommodations in the way that HSs do.
4. Review **{College Readiness Skills}** and the need to practice those skills now

5. Discuss how to access the Office of Disability Services. Provide examples of accommodations, and how to advocate for them.
6. Review **{KP pre-college checklist}** with those students who will pursue this route. Students schedule appt with Guidance Counselor as needed.
7. Discuss opportunities for students to tour local colleges and support them in doing so, as possible. Each student generates a list of questions to ask during the tour.
8. College tours arranged as possible and relevant for students in your class.

Optional Activity: Have students complete **{RU Ready}** checklist and use for class discussion purposes to help them learn the needed skills and work with their families to take the steps needed for college.

Homework: Next week, the topic is interviewing for a job. Come dressed as you would for a job interview in your area of interest.

Week VII: Job Interviews

1. Discuss the purpose of a job interview
2. Discuss questions/topics that may be discussed during an interview
3. How might work behaviors relate to an interview? Highlight participants' positive behaviors.
4. Discuss the option of disclosing disability status and how to address this. **{Form: Disclosure}**
5. Discuss first impressions. Review **{Interview Checklist}**
6. Review **{Interview Rubric}** in detail

Activity: Based on individual job preferences, individuals or teams create list of specific questions that may be asked of them during an interview. **{Form: A Primer on Interview Questions}** For more in-depth questions, use page 4 of {Interview lesson and mock interview form}. Discuss as group and expand on potential responses. Be prepared to talk about what supports or accommodations you may need from an employer. Optional Activity: full lesson plan on interview skills, including mock interview eval and thank you note sample **{Interview skills lesson and mock interview note}**

Activity: Discuss with the group that you will be practicing interviews in the upcoming weeks, which may/may not be videotaped for feedback. At that time, students are expected to come dressed and prepared for an interview (review potential questions and responses).

Week VIII: Mock Interviews/Video feedback

Teacher recruits other KP staff to participate in mock interviews, using the rubric for assessment purposes. If videotaping has occurred during the week, staff has videos/computers set up for review and feedback

1. Review interviewing skills.
2. If relevant, provide individual with self-assessment form.
3. If participant would like feedback from the group, provide them with interviewing feedback form.
4. Regardless of having videotaped, or just working from feedback from staff, provide positive feedback and suggestions for improvement. Each students log/highlights their areas of continued skill development.

Activity: Discuss mock interview experiences. Allow students to identify their own strengths and areas for improvement first, then review completed interview rubrics and/or feedback forms.

{Forms: Interview Rubric; Interview Feedback forms}

Week IX. Job Search

1. Networking (See Elena if you want more content on this from Networking Manual)
 - d. Define networking as most effective method of finding a job
 - e. Who do you know that has a job like the one you want?

Activity: **{Form: Networking Exercise}**

Activity: Develop a script for discussing job opportunities with someone in your network.

2. Online Job Search:

- a. Identify 2-3 of the most current online job search engines {**Online Job Search sites** listing}
- b. Demonstrate how to use/navigate through one site
- c. Discuss how some companies, such as Target, have their own questionnaires/personality surveys that job applicants complete before having their interview
- d. Introduce the importance of using a {**Job Search Log**} and the information to be tracked on it. Provide sample of one completed contact and how it is reflected on the log. Each students maintains their log in their binder.

Homework: Using your script, discuss your job interests with at least one person within your network. If possible, obtain a job application for the next class. {**Form: Phone Script**}

Week X: Job Retention

Keeping and being satisfied on a job involves not only performing job tasks, but also problem-solving, communicating with co-workers and supervisors, etc.

1. Discuss the role of the Massachusetts Rehabilitation Commission as relevant for those students who need help with these things and getting or keeping their jobs.
2. Describe the concept of natural supports and asking for help if/when needed
3. Discuss communication styles: passive; assertive; aggressive

Activity: Role-play potential problems on the job (e.g. scheduling, needing more supervision, setting boundaries, etc.) and how to address them.

Activity: Students discuss status of job search and career plans

Activity: Students review their Employment Binders to ensure they have everything (refer to output list at top of page). Students maintain electronic copy of their resumes for easy updates.