

Section 3: Tools for the Teacher





TOOLS FOR THE TEACHER

The Career Pathways for the Construction Trades program focuses on carpentry, masonry, electrical, and HVAC competencies as well as occupational safety. This collaborative program helps prepare secondary students for future careers in the construction trades by:

- Recruiting quality secondary students for the profession
- Providing students with information about the challenges and opportunities offered by a career in the construction trades
- Provides students a seamless pathway to a career in the construction trades through academic coursework and experiential learning activities with the potential for advanced knowledge and skills

CORE COMPETENCIES/RECOMMENDATIONS

Core competencies include foundation knowledge and skill statements that apply to all careers in the Architecture and Construction Cluster as well as those that apply to all careers in the Construction Pathway. The Architecture and Construction core competencies cover:

- Academic Foundations
- Communications
- Problem-Solving and Critical Thinking
- Information Technology Applications
- Systems

- Safety, Health and Environmental
- Leadership and Teamwork
- Ethical and Legal Responsibilities
- Employability and Career Development
- Technical Skills

More industry-specific competencies for the Construction Pathway are organized as follows:

- Systems
- Safety, Health and Environmental
- Leadership and Teamwork
- Ethical and Legal Responsibilities
- Technical skills

TECHNICAL SKILLS ATTAINMENT (TSA)

The Perkins Act of 2006 (Perkins IV) requires 2S1 Technical Skill Attainment (TSA) to measure the percentage of Career and Technical Education (CTE) concentrators who pass a skill assessment aligned with industry-recognized standards (if available and appropriate). Perkins IV outlines specific requirements and guidelines in the type of assessment used to measure CTE skill proficiency.

Students take the TSA after becoming a concentrator (one who is enrolled in three courses in the same field) and completing a program, rather than taking it after every course. Eventually, all concentrators who complete a program will be expected to take a technical skill assessment. This process will be phased-in by 2012.



The assessment tools (see table 3.1 at right) developed by these national organizations are currently accepted by the Division as meeting the criteria established by Perkins IV:

- American Association of Family and Consumer Sciences (AAFCS)
- Skills USA
- NOCTI

The state will continually monitor and incorporate new assessments as they become available and appropriate. Districts currently using an assessment they believe would qualify as an industry recognized assessment, but not administered by a national organization, should contact their Program Director at the Division for guidance.

For additional questions, contact Kristie Davis, supervisor, Administration and Accountability, (573) 526-4987.

Source: http://dese.mo.gov/divcareered/perkins_iv_tsa_guidelines.htm

INDUSTRY CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENTS FOR PROGRAM COMPLETERS

To be eligible for available positions in the construction trades, students who complete this program will need at least an OSHA 10-hour certification (see pages 17 through 19) and likely a National Center for construction Education and Research (NCCER) certification. For HVAC work, certain Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) certifications may be required. Many program utilize a math pretest for admission to the program.

Table 3.1. Current Available TSAs for Architecture and Construction:

Air Conditioning Certification	HVAC Excellence
Architectural Drafting	SkillsUSA
AutoCAD	Brainbench
Building Construction Occupations	NOCTI
Building Trades Maintenance	NOCTI
Cabinetmaking	NOCTI
Carpentry	NOCTI
Carpentry	SkillsUSA
Construction	PACT (pre-apprenticeship certificate training)
Construction	Ramsay Corporation
Construction Masonry - Blocklaying option	NOCTI
Construction Masonry - Bricklaying option	NOCTI
Construction Masonry - Stone option	NOCTI
Housing (IN PROGRESS)	AAFCS
HVAC	NOCTI
HVAC/R	NOCTI
HVAC/R (IN PROGRESS)	SkillsUSA
Masonry	SkillsUSA
NCCER	
Plumbing	NOCTI
Plumbing	SkillsUSA
Residential Construction	Home Builders Institute (HBI)
Residential Wiring	SkillsUSA



STUDENT PLACEMENT AND FOLLOW-UP (180-DAY FOLLOW-UP)

The 180-day follow-up is a state-mandated measurement of post-graduation career outcomes.

Area career centers direct the 180-day follow-up of students who earn at least one unit of credit at the area career center and report the resulting data for each student to the appropriate sending high school. Each school then enters that student's information into the Missouri Student Information System (MOSIS) database.

If a student earns credit at both the sending high school and the area career center, the sending high school determines to which career education program the student's 180-day follow-up will be reported in MOSIS, considering the student's personal plan of study and the program area for which they received the most credit.

TEACHING CONTENT

CURRICULUM TO USE

Career education programs have written curriculum requirements for each sequential course, balancing classroom/laboratory instruction, leadership, and personal development.

Quality indicators of such programs include:

- Written curriculum guide and grading system/achievement measurement policy
- Annual curriculum review/revision to reflect changes in industry, student needs, and instructional technology



- Development, implementation, and updates for written articulation agreements and dual credit arrangements with postsecondary institutions
- Embedded credit opportunities
- Balance of Career and Technical Student Organization (CTSO) activities and classroom/laboratory instruction to achieve curricular goals

The Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Division of Career Education lists these quality indicators for career education classroom instruction congruent with written curriculum:*

- Lesson plans and teaching calendars derived from the curriculum guide are used to direct the instructional process.
- A variety of instructional methods are used to accommodate all learning styles.
- Effective classroom management techniques facilitate instruction.



- Program/course objectives, assessment methods, and performance expectations are shared with students and parents/guardians prior to instruction.
- An instructional management system exists for reporting student progress and classroom mastery of curriculum competencies.
- The teacher utilizes instructional strategies identified in the students' Individual Education Plan to facilitate student achievement.
- School and community resources are used to effectively achieve curricular and program goals.
- Appropriate equipment and instructional materials are utilized to support the curriculum and instructional process.
- Students can acquire industry-recognized credentials, if applicable that demonstrate skills to meet industry accepted standards.
- The instructor and the guidance staff work cooperatively to provide assistance to the transition to the workplace and/or continued education.
- Work-based learning is integral to the curriculum and program objectives.
- Cooperative education is guided by Department policies for credit and supervised employment for approved high school cooperative education programs.

**From: Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, Division of Career Education. 2006. Common Standards for Career Education Programs.*

The following covers both technical skills training curriculum and resources for soft skills training for construction programs.

TECHNICAL SKILLS TRAINING

Technical skills taught should center on key competencies in carpentry, masonry, electrical, and HVAC trades. All programs are designed to prepare students for an apprenticeship or entry-level position in the field. Use the following as examples and work with your advisory committee to refine your technical skills training based on the core competencies and instruction framework information found in appendices A and B.

CARPENTRY:

- Teach entry-level skills for the major trades involved in residential construction such as carpentry, siding, interior trim, drywall hanging, roofing, and concrete work.
- Provide students with a working knowledge of relevant technology as well as necessary critical thinking and academic skills for pursuing apprenticeships or entry-level careers in residential and commercial construction.
- Include major units of instruction for safety, blueprint reading, foundation layout, framing, roofing, drywall, insulation, painting, finish carpentry, cabinetry, electrical, HVAC, masonry, plumbing, concrete, and siding.

MASONRY

- Provide instruction on safety procedures; make-up properties, uses, and sizes of all masonry units; use of tools and equipment; use of anchors, ties, and reinforcement; types of courses and bonds
- Facilitate experiences in laying brick in various bond patterns used in commercial and residential construc-

tion; properties and technical details of foundations, floors, roofs, walls, and fireplaces; and blueprint reading.

- Teach construction techniques for building fireplaces, and chimneys, arches, special wall openings, double wythe and reinforced masonry, wall anchoring systems, flashing and prevention of water penetration, and masonry paving.
- Facilitate gaining knowledge of various types of stone contraction and tuckpointing.

ELECTRICAL

- Teach students to identify, install, and troubleshoot electrical wiring and associated devices commonly used in both residential and commercial environments and abide by strict safety rules.
- Direct students on how to construct, calculate, and install basic residential (e.g., switches, receptacles, lighting, low voltage communications wiring, service installation) and commercial (e.g., Start-Stop Stations, 3 phase motors, signal and three-phase transformers, relay logic, and programmable logic controllers) wiring.
- Provide students with knowledge of how to interpret designs, drawings, and specifications as well as to demonstrate the appropriate use of industry codes.

HVAC

- Impact an understanding of the basic mechanical refrigeration system and electrical circuits used to power and control air conditioning and refrigeration systems.

- Help students develop basic troubleshooting skills and perform these on domestic refrigeration systems, air conditioners, heating systems, and light commercial refrigeration systems.
- Teach a solid foundation in the principles of heating, ventilation, air conditioning, and refrigeration, combined with extensive laboratory experience
- Provide students with instruction on developing load calculations and testing, systematically trouble shooting, repairing, and maintaining electrical and mechanical HVAC-R systems and components.

SAFETY – OSHA TRAINING

The Occupational Safety and Health Administration’s (OSHA) Outreach Training Program is a voluntary program to train workers in the basics of safety and health hazard recognition and prevention. OSHA authorizes trainers who complete construction and general industry train-the-trainer courses to conduct occupational safety and health classes for workers.

The OSHA Outreach Training Program enjoys wide industry acceptance. Many employers in the building trades, general contractors, employer associations, insurance companies, and manufacturing firms endorse this training as a foundation for occupational safety and health training within their organization and make the program a requirement for employment. In addition, Missouri State law required completion of the 10-hour construction training for workers on various sized publicly funded construction projects as of August 2009.

The 10-hour Construction Industry Outreach Training Program provides an entry-level construction worker a general



awareness for recognizing and preventing hazards on a construction site. Covering a variety of construction safety and health hazards that a worker may encounter at a construction site; this training emphasizes hazard identification as well as avoidance, control, and prevention, rather than focusing solely on OSHA standards. Workers must receive additional training on hazards specific to their job. Topics covered in the 10-hour class include those that are:

- **Mandatory (4 hours):** Four topics to be taught, ranging from one-half to two hours each
- **Elective (2 hours):** Choose at least two of these topics to teach, for a minimum of one-half hour each. Must cover at least two hours.
- **Optional (4 hours):** Teach any other construction industry hazards or policies and/or expand on the mandatory or elective topics, minimum of one-half hour each.

Table 3.2 (on the next page) details the topics to be covered in these three areas.

Finding an OSHA 10-Hour Outreach Class

You can find a 10- hour construction outreach training course by:

- Visiting OutreachTrainers.org — This free Web site lists authorized trainers for OSHA outreach training classes based on type of training and proximity. OSHA encourages authorized outreach trainers to add their trainer profile and training schedules to the site.

■ Contacting one of four regional Outreach Training Institute Education Centers:

— Metropolitan Community College
Business and Technology
775 Universal Avenue

Kansas City, MO 64120-1313

Phone: (800) 841-7158, Fax: (816) 482-5454

— Midwest OSHA Education Centers:

National Safety Council

11620 M Circle

Omaha, NE 68137-2231

Phone: (800) 592-9004, Fax: (402) 896-6331

Saint Louis University

3545 Lafayette, Ste. 300

St. Louis, MO 63104-8150

Phone: (800) 332-8833, Fax: (314) 977-8150

Kirkwood Community College

6301 Kirkwood Blvd. SW

Cedar Rapids, IA 52404-5260

Phone: (800) 464-6874, Fax: (319) 398-1250





Table 3.2. 10 Hour Construction Industry Required Course Topics

*OSHA SUBPART REFERENCES ARE PROVIDED FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES; TRAINING SHOULD EMPHASIZE HAZARD AWARENESS	
MANDATORY - 4 HOURS	ELECTIVE - 2 HOURS
<p>One Hour - Introduction to OSHA including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OSHA Act, General Duty Clause, Employer and Employee Rights and Responsibilities, Whistleblower Rights, Record-keeping basics • Inspections, Citations, and Penalties • General Safety and Health Provisions, Subpart C • Competent Person, Subpart C • Value of Safety and Health • OSHA Website and available resources • OSHA 800 number <p>Two Hours (minimum 15 minutes on each of 4 areas) OSHA Focus Four Hazards</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fall Protection, Subpart M • Electrical, Subpart K • Struck by (e.g., falling objects, trucks, cranes) • Caught in/between (e.g., trench hazards, equipment) <p>30 Minutes Personal Protective and Lifesaving Equipment, Subpart E</p> <p>30 Minutes Health Hazards in Construction (e.g., noise, hazards communication and crystalline silica)</p>	<p>Choose at least two of the following elective topics:</p> <p>These topics must add up to at least two hours: Minimum one-half hour each:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Materials Handling, Storage, Use and Disposal, Subpart H • Tools - Hand and Power, Subpart I • Scaffolds, Subpart L • Cranes, Derricks, Hoists, Elevators, and Conveyors, Subpart N • Excavations, Subpart P • Stairways and Ladders, Subpart X <p>Optional - 4 hours</p> <p>For the remaining four class hours: Teach any other construction industry hazards or policies and/or expand on the mandatory or elective topics.</p>

From: U.S. Department of Labor, Occupational Safety and Health Administration, http://www.osha.gov/dte/outreach/construction_generalindustry/construction.html



SOFT SKILLS TRAINING

Soft skills training – the nuts and bolts of how to get and keep a job — involves an understanding of what employers expect from those they hire, using that understanding to craft effective resumes and cover letters, and successfully completing job applications and interviews. In addition, it is important for those seeking construction-related positions to understand the types of pre-employment testing they might encounter as well as their rights related to taking these tests.

WHAT EMPLOYERS EXPECT

You can learn a great deal about what a potential employer may be looking for in a job candidate by the words they use in their advertisements, job descriptions, and even during an interview. Knowing the kinds of things to emphasize about you that fit with these expectations can be a real boost for your job search.

Use the information in table 3.3 (at right) as a guide to matching your resume, cover letter, and rehearsed interview responses to key terms used in job listings.

GUIDELINES FOR RESUMES AND COVER LETTERS

A resume is one of the most fundamental tools of job seekers, so take the time and care to develop the best resume based on your previous work experience and job search aspirations. For some job seekers, it is wise to develop different types of resumes to use in different situations. Use table 3.4 on the next page to determine which types of resumes best fit your experience and job-seeking approach.

Table 3.3. Employer Expectations/Job Description Terms

KEY TERM	MEANING	ABILITIES TO EMPHASIZE
<i>A Team Player</i>	Those able to relate and work well with a diverse people, who show up to work with a “winning” attitude, who pull their own load without griping about having to pull someone else’s at times	Working with others in complex and stressful situations Observing and respecting an organization’s chain of command Accepting constructive criticism as helpful Handling conflict without antagonism Competing with others and being measured on performance in relation to others Encouraging others to be effective, enthusiastic members of the team
<i>A Go-Getter</i>	Those able to get the ball rolling alone, don’t need to be babied or asked twice to do something, can generate new ideas that actually benefit the company	Identifying and working toward specific goals Looking for things that need to be done Confronting problems that may not have standard solutions Being energetic about making things move forward Sustaining work effort at an above-average rate
<i>Multifaceted</i>	Those who can perform a variety of duties with ease and enthusiasm and are willing to learn new skills	Possessing the intelligence, education, and skills required for the position Quickly learning how things are done in a company Following directions exactly
<i>Flexible</i>	Those who can “go with the flow,” and handle assignments as needed	Accepting assignments not necessarily part of the job description Dealing positively and effectively with situations and people Changing and being receptive to new situations and ideas
<i>A Good Communicator</i>	Those with poise, tact, something worthwhile to say, and a good command of the English language; those who can converse with ease and write as compellingly as they speak	Organizing thoughts and ideas effectively Expressing ideas clearly when speaking and writing Presenting ideas persuasively Effectively asking for clarification Accepting and conveying constructive criticism without taking it personally or becoming angry
<i>Dependable</i>	Those who will be honest, show up on time, focus on work when at work, and show loyalty to the company	Being punctual and dressing appropriately Providing advanced notice of any personal commitments that cannot be scheduled before or after working hours Avoiding personal calls, emails, and Internet use during work hours Protecting company proprietary business information and practices



Table 3.4. Types of Resumes

TYPE	DESCRIPTION	BEST FOR THOSE WHO...	NOT RECOMMENDED FOR THOSE WHO...
Chronological	Organized by employment history in reverse chronological order with job titles/names and locations of employers/dates of employment/accomplishments, working backwards 10-15 years maximum	Apply to the widest variety of employers as well as recruiters and Internet job boards	Have gaps in employment or lack of employment history
Functional	Organized by skill and function clusters with company names, employment dates, and position titles intentionally omitted	Need to highlight transferable skills for a new industry; have limited or checkered job history, have been out of the workforce for awhile or have just entered the job market after graduation	Are applying to recruiters, head hunters, employers in conservative fields (e.g., banking, accounting, law), international employers, or Internet job boards
Combination	Organized with both functional and chronological characteristics; however, the work history section only includes job title, name and location of employer, and dates of employment; highlights skills and achievements, clusters of transferable skills and experiences; deemphasizes job chronology	Have a diverse job history, work experience that is related but not an exact fit to desired position; need to downplay employment history, academic deficiencies, or limited experience	Are applying to recruiters, head hunters, employers in conservative fields (e.g., banking, accounting, law), international employers, or Internet job boards

Drafting Your Resume

Give your resume as sharp a focus as possible. Given that employers screen resumes for between 2.5 and 20 seconds, you need a way to show the employer at a glance your strengths and interests.

Resumes need not follow a traditional, chronological format (where experience and education are the primary focus);

they can focus on your accomplishments and highlight your qualifications. Keep your resume short (one page is ideal), and try to focus on the impacts of what you've done in terms of solving problems, recognition (winning awards or special honors), and how you've advanced in your skills as a result of a particular experience.

General Content Recommendations:

1. Always tell the truth on your resume.
2. Include as much contact information as possible; any information that would enable an employer to reach you during business hours.
3. Don't use personal pronouns (e.g., I, my, me) in a resume.
4. Use strong, concrete action verbs consistently
5. Avoid including information about:
 - Height and weight
 - Age, date of birth, or place of birth
 - Marital status, sex, ethnicity/race
 - Health
 - Hobbies
 - Social security number
 - Reasons for leaving previous job(s)/names of former supervisors
 - Specific street addresses or phone numbers of former employers
 - Picture of yourself, salary information
 - Any information that could be perceived as controversial (e.g., religion, church affiliations, or political affiliations)

General Format Recommendations:

1. Keep the resume to a single page.
2. Use a bulleted list style to make your resume more reader-friendly.
3. Avoid justified text blocks; they insert odd spaces between words. Instead, make your type flush left.
4. Proofread carefully: misspellings, incorrect grammar, and typos in a resume can signal that you lack attention to detail.

Use the following to draft your resume:

Contact Information (name, address, daytime phone, e-mail):

Objective: What kind of position are you seeking? What is important to you in a job? Is it a chance to learn new skills or put those you already have to use in the real world; is it an opportunity to serve a cause you believe in, or learn more about a career you're thinking of pursuing? For example: "Objective: To contribute strong carpentry skills and experience to your historic renovation company."

Major Accomplishments: What have you done in school, sports, community service, or previous jobs that made a difference in terms of projects completed, money saved, people helped, etc.? Have you received any awards or honors? Have you been told that a project was completed ahead of schedule, on time, or for less money because of your involvement?



(Optional) Summary of Qualifications: It might be helpful to consider the possibility of a functional format for your resume — a format organized around functional skills clusters. After listing three to four skills clusters and showing how you've demonstrated those skills, you provide a bare bones work history. This format can be strategic for career changers, students and others who lack experience, and those with gaps in their employment as well as those re-entering the workforce. For example, you might group qualifications according to construction estimating, cabinetry, frame construction, or supervisory expertise.

Drafting Your Cover Letter

Use a tailored cover letter to expand or amplify the information you listed in your resume, limiting what you say to only those specific qualifications relevant to the job you’re applying for. Use the position description (or advertisement) for the job to identify key qualifications the employer is looking for: these tell you what the employer needs. Your cover letter should tell the employer how your experience and skills meet those needs.

Use the guidance below and on the next page to draft a tailored cover letter for each job for which you apply.

Your Address: _____

Date: _____

Name/Title of Contact Person and Address:

Salutation: Be sure to use the person’s name and title in the salutation if the advertisement gives the name. If not, use “Hiring Manager” or “Human Resources Manager” or other title appropriate for the situation. You can always call a company and ask for the name or title of the person who will be accepting resumes for a specific, advertised position. The more you pay attention to these details, the better received your resume will be received.

Subject: Make your opening direct, and refer to the position and the source for your information (e.g., “Subject: Production Coordinator Position Advertised in the Sunday Times”).

Beginning Statement: Focus on the need you can fill (e.g., “My qualifications closely match your requirements for a detail-oriented construction coordinator listed in today’s Times advertisement.”).





Job Applications

As part of the job application process, you will likely be asked to complete an employment application, even if you already have a resume and cover letter prepared. This allows the potential employer to verify your resume information, have a signed record of your personal and employment history, and determine your ability to communicate information accurately, completely, and legibly. Use these guidelines to write attention-getting applications:

- **Complete all requested information.** Don't leave anything blank. Come to the interview prepared with any information you might need to reference when filling out the application. One tip is to download a sample job application from the Internet, complete it at home, and take it with you as a reference to every job interview. If you don't know the details, consider bringing the application home and returning it when it's completed. You can also enter as much information as you know; for example, you could give a salary range for a past job if you don't know the exact amount. Avoid answering with "N/A" or "see resume" — responses that may be interpreted as lazy by the potential employer.
- **Be consistent with all information from your resume, cover letter, and application.** Double check all materials to ensure there are no discrepancies in the information you provided. For example: Do all the dates match up? Are the job titles and descriptions consistent? Consistency may very well be something an employer wants to ensure before agreeing to grant you an interview.
- **Write clearly and neatly**, using black or blue ink. Don't let your application be rejected because potential employers can't read your answers to application questions.
- **Check for spelling and grammatical errors.** Whether in print or online, take your time and proofread your job application form (either on your own or ask someone else) before turning it in. Don't risk losing out on a good job opportunity because the potential employer thought you were careless.
- **List your most recent job first** when completing employment information. Be sure to have information with you about each job (e.g., contact info, supervisor's name, dates employed, salary, reason for leaving, awards or accomplishments while at that position, etc.).
- **List your most recent education first.** Include vocational schools and training programs as well as college and high school. Know what degrees, diplomas, or certificates you earned and dates of graduation.
- **References don't necessarily have to be professional.** References can be teachers, people you've worked with as a volunteer or leaders of student organizations (e.g., scouting, 4H, FFA, etc.). Just make sure to ask for permission and verify contact information prior to listing each reference.
- **Ask for help** if you don't understand an item on the application or if you need more time than allotted to adequately complete the form. Many times, administrative assistants who give you the application to fill out have some input into the hiring decision. Treat



them with respect, and they will likely put in “a good word” for you.

- **When you need to apply for a job online, accuracy, consistency, and completeness are equally important as when filling out a print application.** Additionally, many employers and recruiters now use the online application process as a screening tool to “weed out” those applicants who aren’t a good fit for the position. Consider filling out some online applications for companies you’re NOT interested in working for to get practice for completing the applications that really count.

Don’t forget to sign your application!

Interviews

A crucial part of any hiring process for a company is the job interview. During an interview, you will want to find out what you can about the company, make a great first impression, and effectively respond to the interviewers questions. Remember that the interview is a way for you to learn if the job is right for you as well. You may be asked to complete an application or describe what you would do in a hypothetical situation (also known as “behavioral interviewing”).

The key is to be prepared. Don’t rely on your application or resume to do the selling for you. Interviewers will want you to be convincing.

To maximize your chances of getting the position you want, use the tips below to plan your strategy for before, during, and after the interview.

Before the Interview

- Learn as much as you can about the company beforehand — know its products and services, its profit margin, its management, its culture, its dress code, and anything else you can think of. Good sources are your career services center, a college or public library, and the Internet. Research similar companies, the industry in general, and typical salary range for this field and position.
- Do practice interviews with a career counselor, friends, and family members — or with yourself, in front of a mirror. Many career services centers offer workshops, mock interviews, or one-on-one coaching. Some even make videotapes of mock interviews. Mock up answers to behavioral interviewing questions (see page 21 for an example).
- Think about how your experience in work, classes, and activities can relate to the job you’re seeking.
- Allow plenty of time to get to the interview and, if possible, visit the site in advance and time how long it takes to get there. Arrive on time or a few minutes early.
- Plan your interview attire in advance and make sure your clothing is pressed, your shoes are shined, and your hair and nails are well groomed. If you aren’t sure what to wear, visit the organization and watch employees coming in and out of the office to see what they are wearing.
- Bring extra copies of your resume and a list of references. Don’t bring food, drink, or your cell phone (except if “off”) to the interview.

During the Interview

- Greet the interviewer by last name and positively connect with him or her; smile, shake hands, make eye contact, exude confidence, and be engaging.
- Project energy and enthusiasm. Speak slowly and clearly and don't be afraid to pause for a moment to collect your thoughts. Keep your answers succinct, to-the-point and focused and don't ramble — simply answer the question. If you don't understand a question or need a moment to think about it, say so. Never pretend to know something or someone when you don't.
- Be honest. Don't try to cover up mistakes. Instead, focus on how you learned from them. Explain your “yes” or “no” answers whenever possible.
- Be assertive about your qualifications and interest in the opportunity for professional development. Avoid asking questions about salary and benefits, and respond to questions about your salary expectations with a range based on what you've researched about the industry.
- If presented with an application, fill it out neatly and completely. Don't attach your resume unless you're told to do so.
- Listen carefully and respond succinctly and articulately. Look the hiring manager in the eye while speaking.
- Early in the meeting, try to get the interviewer to describe the job and the duties to you so you can focus your responses on your background, skills, and accomplishments that relate to the position.



- Don't make negative remarks about present or former employers. When explaining your reasons for leaving, communicate your rationale professionally.
- Don't over-answer questions. If the interviewer steers the conversation into controversial, or even illegal, topics, try to do more listening than speaking. Keep your responses non-committal.

After the Interview

- Ask the interviewer for a business card and send a thank-you note or e-mail as soon as possible.
- Use all interview experiences (positive and negative) to learn. What did you do well? What could you improve next time?

Sources:

- National Association of Colleges and Employers. *JobWeb.com*. <http://www.jobweb.com/Interview/help.aspx?id=636>.
- Robert Half Management Resources. (2009). <http://www.robertyhalffinance.com/InterviewDosAndDonts#Dos>

Talk with your program administrator, teacher, or guidance counselor about what to expect once hired in terms of benefits and tax withholding.



Behavioral Interviewing Sample

What would you do if, during an interview, the company’s hiring manager said to you, “Tell me how you dealt with a situation where you were working with a team and one of the members wasn’t contributing as expected.”

Try the STAR approach to dealing with these types of hypothetical situation questions. STAR stands for Situation or Task, Action you took, Results you achieved (See table 3.5. at right).

Using the STAR approach, here’s how you might answer that original question about a coworker:

Situation or Task: “I was assigned to a team in my marketing class to propose a method for increasing revenues for a particular business by 10 percent. One of the members of my team wasn’t attending many meetings and didn’t have his assignments prepared.”

Action You Took: “I decided to talk with him; in private, about how the group needed every member to complete their assigned tasks, and asked what he needed to get back on track. He told me that he was having trouble with one of his other classes, and it took up most of his time. With his consent, we talked about this with the other members of the team. The team recommended that he ask the Student Tutorial Center for help on his other class, and we would help him get caught up with our team project. He agreed.”

Results You Achieved: “It took a couple of weeks for him to catch up, but after he did, he completed his assignments on time, and our group got an “A” on the project. He also thanked the group during his part of the presentation for helping him do well in both of his classes.”

Table 3.5. STAR Approach to Behavioral Interviewing

SITUATION OR TASK	Describe the situation that you were in or the task that you needed to accomplish. You must describe a specific event or situation, not a generalized description of what you have done in the past. Be sure to give enough detail for the interviewer to understand. This situation can be from a previous job, from a volunteer experience, or any relevant event.
ACTION YOU TOOK	Describe the action you took and be sure to keep the focus on you. Even if you are discussing a group project or effort, describe what you did — not the efforts of the team. Don’t tell what you might do, tell what you did.
RESULTS YOU ACHIEVED	What happened? How did the event end? What did you accomplish? What did you learn?

Sources:

- “Acing the Behavioral Interview.” Career Center California State University, Chico. (2007). <http://www.csuchico.edu/plc/behav-interview.html>.
- “STAR Interviewing Response Technique for Success in Behavioral Job Interviews.” Quintessential Careers. (2009). http://www.quintcareers.com/STAR_interviewing.html.

For More Information on Behavioral Interviewing:

1. Free Sample Behavioral Interview Questions
Quintessential Careers. (2009). http://www.quintcareers.com/sample_behavioral.html.
2. The 150 Typical Job Interview Questions
Quintessential Careers. (2009). http://www.quintcareers.com/interview_question_database/interview_questions.html.
3. It’s Your Turn: What to Ask an Interviewer
Hovanec, E. (2009). Yahoo! Hot Jobs. http://hotjobs.yahoo.com/interview/Its_Your_Turn_What_to_Ask_an_Interviewer__2003228-1221.html?subtopic=Interview+Preparation.
4. Doyle, A. About.com. <http://jobsearch.about.com/od/thankyouletters/a/thankyouletters.htm>.



Pre-Employment Testing

In addition to interviews, employers often use tests and other selection procedures to screen applicants. This practice is legal, so long as companies don't use the tests to discriminate based on race, color, sex, national origin, religion, disability, or age (40 or older). Additionally, employment tests must relate to the jobs they are being used to screen for and for the purposes for which they are being used. Depending on the type of test, employment testing can be conducted online or in the employer's office.

Typical Employment Tests

■ **Personality Tests — Tests that:**

- Assess the degree to which a person has certain traits or dispositions
- Predict the likelihood that a person will engage in certain conduct
- Determine the “fit” between the job and the candidate

■ **Pre-Employment Physical Exams** — A pre-employment physical examination sometimes required to determine an individual's suitability to consistently perform tasks inherent in a particular type of work

■ **Drug Tests** — Laboratory tests of urine, hair, saliva, or sweat that show the presence of drugs or alcohol

■ **Cognitive (or Intelligence) Tests** — Assessments of a candidate's reasoning, memory, perceptual speed and accuracy, and skills in arithmetic and reading

comprehension as well as knowledge of a particular function or job

■ **Physical Ability Tests** — Measurement of an applicant's physical ability to perform a particular task or the strength of specific muscle groups as well as strength and stamina in general

■ **Sample Job Tasks** — Assessment of an applicant's performance and aptitude on particular tasks (e.g., performance tests, simulations, work samples, and realistic job previews)

■ **Background and Credit Checks** — Research on arrest and conviction history as well as credit and financial history

■ **English Proficiency Tests** — Assessment of a candidate's fluency with the English language

Your Rights and Employment Testing

There is virtually no government regulation regarding who can design and administer employment tests; however, most large human resource consulting firms and some corporations will use organizational psychologists to develop and perform assessments. These psychologists abide by a codes of ethics and guidelines related to test reliability and validity, scrupulously follow laws forbidding discrimination, and promote respectful treatment for test takers. See the information on the American Psychological Association's Web site (www.apa.org), *The Rights and Responsibilities of Test Takers*. Of course, assessors who are not psychologists are not necessarily bound by a professional code of conduct.

At no time should you be asked any questions about disabilities you may or may not have; this is illegal under the Ameri-

cans with Disabilities Act. Questions about sexual orientation, sexual practices, with whom you live, your religious beliefs, or your ethnic background are also inappropriate although not necessarily illegal.

Of course, you can refuse to take a test or participate in any part of any test. This will probably result in being rejected for the job. If you believe that the testing was illegal in any respect, you can pursue legal remedies just as you can for any unfair and illegal employment practice. If you felt the assessor at any time treated you unfairly or with disrespect, you may want to bring that up with the employer and/or the assessment firm.

PROFESSIONALISM

Your day-to-day performance on the job should reflect professionalism in terms of dressing appropriately for the work environment, limiting personal cell phone usage, avoiding texting, using appropriate language, and avoiding all types of harassment.

ACCESSING CORE COMPETENCIES/INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORKS

Appendix A (pages 37 through 48) provides the core competencies required for success in the construction trades. Appendix B (pages 49 through xx) “crosswalks” the relevant instructional frameworks for these competencies. A “crosswalk” links two or more classification systems and can help career development program administrators and teachers to:

- Integrate academic and vocational coursework
- Correlate curricula with academic/vocational standards

- See how activities in vocational student organizations can align with academic or vocational standards
- Articulate Tech Prep high school and technical/community college courses
- Link student interests and potential careers

Crosswalks can be a useful tool to make connections between the various systems and standards in use for reporting and statistical analysis, curriculum and academic program development, and career counseling.

For More Information on Pre-employment Tests:

- Klein, E. (2009). North Bridge Group, Inc. <http://www.asktheheadhunter.com/gv000802.htm>.

