

career
development manitoba



A PRACTITIONER'S
GUIDE TO
SUCCESS
IN THE
WORKPLACE

YOUR FUTURE YOUR WAY

Manitoba 

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Introduction

Whether your clients are new to the workforce or seasoned professionals, the ability to be successful at work is one that everyone can benefit from. The client resource, **A Guide to Success in the Workplace**, contains information and worksheets to support clients as they strive for success at work. The detailed information found within the client resource is not repeated here. Instead the focus of this guide will be to provide facilitators with additional information, tips and strategies for conducting a workshop on achieving success in the workplace.

Information provided in this guide covers the core concepts related to success in the workplace. Practitioners are encouraged to adapt materials to their personal style and needs of their clients.

Guiding Frameworks

Many skills can be developed completing the Success in the Workplace guide. In the following sections, relevant skills/competencies are identified from three frameworks: Blueprint for Life/Work Designs, Essential Skills and Employability Skills 2000+.

Blueprint for Life/Work Designs

The Success in the Workplace guide helps build the following Blueprint competencies:

- Competency 1 – build and maintain a positive self-image
 - Level 2 – build a positive self-image and understand its influence on one’s life and work
- Competency 2 – interact positively and effectively with others
 - Level 2 – Develop abilities for building positive relationships in one’s life and work
- Competency 4 – participate in life-long learning supportive of life/work goals
 - Level 2 – link lifelong learning to one’s life/work scenario, both present and future
- Competency 7 – secure/create and maintain work
 - Level 3 – develop abilities to seek, obtain/create and maintain work
- Competency 8 – make life/work enhancing decisions
 - Level 4 – incorporate adult life reality into life/work decision making
- Competency 9 – maintain balanced life and work roles
 - Level 3 – link life styles and life stages to life/work building
- Competency 11 – understand, engage in, and manage one’s own life/work building processes
 - Level 3 – recognize and take charge of one’s life/work building process

Essential Skills

The guide *Success in the Workplace* will improve the development of all Essential Skills:

- reading text
- document use
- numeracy
- writing
- oral communication
- working with others
- continuous learning
- thinking skills
- computer use

Employability Skills 2000+

Success in the Workplace will improve:

- Fundamental Skills
 - o communicate
 - o think and solve problems
 - o manage information
- Personal Management Skills
 - o demonstrate positive attitudes and behaviours
 - o be responsible
 - o be adaptable
 - o learn continuously
- Teamwork Skills
 - o work with others

Canadian Standards and Guidelines for Career Development Practitioners

Supporting individuals to achieve and maintain workplace success is an important role for career development practitioners. To do this well, practitioners would need all of the core competencies outlined in the *Standards and Guidelines: Professional/Ethical Behaviour, Interpersonal Competence, Career Development Knowledge, and Needs Assessment and Referral Expertise*.

In addition, supporting individuals to achieve workplace success overlaps with many of the Areas of Specialization in the *Standards and Guidelines*, including:

- Assessment
- Facilitated and Individual Group Learning
- Career Counselling
- Information and Resource Management
- Work Development
- Community Capacity Building

Preparing for Your Workshop or Individual Session

You'll need to review and gather the following items as you prepare to deliver the workshop or work individually with a client. Some practitioners like to use photocopied handouts of the charts and activities in the guide. This leaves the client guide fresh and clean for individual use after the session. Others prefer to have clients write directly on the guide, ensuring that all of the topical information stays in one place. Feel free to tailor the workshop to your personal style and participants' needs. Your personal preference will impact the resources you need to gather as you prepare for your workshop or individual session.

Required:

- **A Guide to Success in the Workplace** (one copy per participant)
- pens, pencils
- for workshops:
 - o computer, LCD projector and screen
 - o flip chart paper and markers

Optional:

- PowerPoint slides, printed three or six slides per page; one set per client

PowerPoint Slides

The following presentation contains 28 slides. Reviewing the slide content, engaging in discussions with participants, and completing the activities should result in a five hour workshop (times listed are estimates and may depend on factors including number of participants). Discussions and activities can be expanded or contracted depending on the time you have available to conduct the workshop. Where applicable, the facilitator notes will mention how to make adjustments for time constraints. Note: the content within the following slides may be challenging to read due to size; see the PowerPoint document to review the complete content.



Welcome participants to workshop
Introductions

- Have participants introduce themselves
- An icebreaker activity can be incorporated; see Icebreakers/Energizers section for more information

Time:

- Expect introductions to take three-to-five minutes per participant. Icebreakers may take longer. Workshop time will need to be adjusted accordingly



Review the agenda; discuss how this topic is relevant to ALL workers, regardless of their experience levels

Time:

- three-to-five minutes

**The key to success in the modern workplace,
as in life,
is not finding the right job or life partner,
it's becoming the right person,
Continuously.**

-Phillip S. Jarvis

Review quote; discuss the nature of success at work and how it is “a work in progress”; success is something that needs to be cultivated on an ongoing basis.

Ask clients about their observations and experiences about work; think about people that they’ve encountered that they think were successful – what is it about those people that made them successful? Ask participants to think about people they’ve encountered who weren’t/aren’t successful at work – what is it about them that has contributed to their lack of success (es: always late, spend too much time talking and not working).

Time:

- three-to-five minutes

Starting a New Job

- Be punctual/arrive early
- Take initiative
- Be willing to learn
 - Policies and procedures
 - Skills and competencies
- Be respectful
- Work hard
- Work smart
- Believe in yourself

Discuss how starting a new job can be nerve wracking...there is often lots to learn, people to meet, and most work is fast-paced. Remind participants it is okay to take notes and ask questions.

Time:

- 10 minutes

Qualities of Successful Employees

- Employability Skills
 - Communication, use numbers, work with others, work safely
- Attitudes
 - Good work ethic, confident, team player, positive, flexible
- Essential Skills
 - Reading, numeracy, writing, continuous learning

Brainstorm other qualities of successful employees.

Time:

- 10 - 15 minutes

**If we manage conflict constructively,
we harness its energy
for creativity and development.**
—Kenneth Kaye

Review quote; discuss how conflict is likely going to happen, especially during stressful times. It is impossible to avoid conflict so it is the response to conflict that counts.

Time:

- three-to-five minutes

Managing Conflict at Work

- Be open to the opinions and ideas of others
- Be willing to listen
- Talk openly to resolve problems
- Seek help if needed
- Be respectful of others
- Work as a member of the team

Depending on the time available and participant group, a conflict role play would be a good addition to the workshop. Or create scenarios (or have the group suggest ones they've witnessed) and have small groups brainstorm the most effective way to solve the conflict.

Time:

- 10 - 12 minutes
- 15 - 20 minutes if including role play

Understanding Corporate Culture

- Communicates corporate values, beliefs, and attitudes
- Defines what's important (or not)
- Assists individuals to
 - Determine person/organization fit
 - Discover "insider" language

If time (and the situation) permits have participants complete a corporate culture activity (a culture audit of a local business).

This could be set up a few ways:

- Scavenger hunt: in triads have students visit a local business (ex.: coffee shop, grocery store) and conduct a culture audit.
- Facilitator could prepare in advance with brochures, print outs from website, articles in newspaper, etc.
- Participants could use computers to research specific companies.

In any instance, participants should be prepared to:

- Describe the company in 10 words or less
- Identify what is really important to the company?
- Does this seem like a place you'd like to work.

Time:

- 20 - 25 minutes, longer if conducting scavenger hunt

Workplace Tips

- Have a positive attitude
- Ask for help if needed
- Show your enthusiasm
- Take initiative
- Be friendly and willing to learn
- Ask for feedback
- Be honest and respectful

Summarize with the group. The full list of **Workplace Tips** are in the client guide.

Time:

- five-to-seven minutes

Effective Career Management

- Identifies career opportunities
 - Today and in future
- Provides a map
 - “How to get there from here”
- Provides a focus
 - Benchmarking skills
 - Personal and professional development activities
 - Lifelong learning

Discuss the notion of “management”. Stress the importance of life long learning and the planning associated with it.

Time:

- 10 minutes

Tips for Managing Your Career

- Be willing to learn
- Welcome new experiences/opportunities
- Believe in yourself
- Set goals and follow through
- Develop positive relationships
- Take an active role; don't expect others to take the lead

Refer participants to the Career Management Behaviours Checklist, activity in the client guide. Have participants complete the checklist, individually.

Debrief the checklist, exploring:

- What did people notice?
- How many behaviours were people engaging in unconsciously/consciously?

Time:

- 20 - 25 minutes

Importance of Continuous Learning

- Lifelong learning is an essential skill
- Benefits include
 - Keeping skills/knowledge current
 - Learning new skills
 - Creating opportunities for promotion
 - Increasing self-confidence
 - Discovering new interests
 - Enhancing job satisfaction
 - Increasing employability

Stress the importance of lifelong learning. Once “training” (ex: a course) is finished doesn’t mean that learning stops. Participants should recognize informal learning (on the job) but also be prepared to take courses, workshops, etc. and determine how to apply learning in their work environment.

Time:

- 15 minutes

Learning Opportunities

- Formal education
 - Enrolling in courses or programs
- Informal approaches
 - Reading
 - Networking
 - Volunteering
 - On-the-job training
 - Workshops
 - Mentoring

Ask clients to brainstorm or name any recent activities that they’ve participated in that could be considered learning opportunities (ex: this workshop).

Time:

- 5 - 7 minutes

Personal Learning Plan

- Identify needs for more skills and knowledge
- Develop plan to fill gaps

*Never become so much of an expert
that you stop gaining expertise.
View life as a continuous learning experience.
~ Denis Waitley*

Refer participants to the “**Comparing Your Skills and Personal Learning Plan**” in the client guide. Have clients:

- complete the worksheet
- compare their skills to the skills needed for the job they are considering
- highlight gaps
- develop a plan to “fill in” the gaps

Time:

- 15 - 20 minutes

Mentor

- A person with specific experience/expertise to share
- Mentors can help you
 - Become familiar with a new workplace
 - Learn about corporate culture
 - Learn from experience
 - Network
 - Increase productivity at work

Discuss if anyone has had a mentor or been a mentor. Have participants reflect on who, in their network, might be a good mentor.

Time:

- 10 minutes

Finding a Mentor

- Someone at work or who does similar work
- Look for a mentor who is
 - A good communicator
 - Able to motivate/inspire
 - Willing to share knowledge/experiences
 - Interested in helping others
 - Trustworthy

Have participants reflect on who, in their network, might be a good mentor. Ask how they might approach that person.

Time:

- 10 minutes

Success at Work

One essential ingredient is to define what success at work means for you. If you don't take time to define what success means, then how will you know if you've achieved it?

For many people, their idea of success is closely linked to their work values.

Review quote; provide examples of how success might look different for people (ex: could use personal examples or examples from client guide).

If time permits, could discuss how the idea of "success" might change throughout one's life.

Time:

- 10 - 15 minutes

My Work Values

- Ask yourself
 - Why am I working?
 - What is important to me about work?
 - What do I value most?

Refer participants to the "What Do You Value At Work?" activity:

- Complete the values checklist.
- Working in groups of two or three, talk about what success at work means to you.

Time:

- 15 - 20 minutes

Performance Reviews

- Identify accomplishments, successes, shortcomings
- Highlight professional development/training needs
- Communicate career goals of workers
- Identify whether organizational goals/targets are being met
- Support succession plans
- Provide rationale for pay increase, or not

Ask how many clients have had a performance review at work? What was their experience with it (ex: was it self-evaluation, evaluation delivered with little/no opportunity for discussion)?

Time:

- 10 - 15 minutes

Preparing for a Performance Review

- Be honest – only take credit for your achievements
- Use portfolio to highlight accomplishments
- Bring emails, thank you cards, or other “evidence”
- Ask co-workers and/or clients for feedback
- Review previous performance evaluations
- Complete a self-assessment

If working with clients who are unemployed, ask them to think about their last job, volunteer experiences, or any other activities that they're engaged in (ex: searching for work, leisure/hobby activities).

Refer clients to the “**Self-Assessment Performance Review**” worksheet in the client guide.

If participants are working, this activity can be completed but may not be appropriate if participants are unemployed.

Time:

- 10 minutes

Negotiations

- Before negotiating salary/benefit changes, ask yourself
 - Does my performance deserve an increase?
 - Has my job description changed?
 - Am I being paid fairly?
 - Am I happy with my current work situation?
- Know what the job is worth
 - Research similar jobs for salary information
- Look for win-win opportunities
 - If pay increase isn't possible, perhaps extra time off?

Discuss whether anyone has done negotiating. For people with little or no paid work experience, you may need to encourage clients to think about other life experiences in which they have experienced negotiation (ex: negotiating child care arrangements, negotiating a large purchase such as a car or house).

Time:

- 10 minutes

4 “P’ s” of Successful Negotiation

- Create a **positive** environment (think win-win)
- **Prepare**
 - Brainstorm compensation possibilities and reasoning
- **Prioritize** possibilities to consider
 - e.g. will accept lower salary with more vacation days
- Be **patient**
 - Allow time for thoughtful response

Brainstorm possible priorities that participants might have; what could influence these priorities over time?

Perhaps share an experience (personal or client) about negotiation (failed and/or successful. Talk about values and how this can impact what individuals negotiate for (ex: more money, more time off, flexible work hours).

Time:

- 15 minutes

Work-Life Balance

- Unique for every person
- Involves values, priorities, life circumstances
- Ignoring it can lead to
 - Poor work performance
 - Strained relationships
 - Increased illness; Poor health
 - Stress and anxiety
 - Depression
 - Conflict

Have participants brainstorm all of the different areas of life that they try to balance (ex: work, family, leisure).

Time:

- five-to-seven minutes

Work-Life Balance

- Before taking on new activities/responsibilities, ask
 - Am I interested?
 - Do I have the time and ability to do this?
 - Will I have to give up something else?
 - What will my life look like if I take this on?
 - Can I say no? What are the consequences?

Read slide and illustrate with an example (ex: asked to help out with a school fundraiser but don't really have the time to help – what would you do?); ask participants if they have examples of being asked to take on a new task/activity when they are already feeling busy/overwhelmed.

Time:

- 10 minutes

The Balance Wheel



Review balance wheel categories; have participants think about any other categories that they think should be on their balance wheel.

Refer participants to the **“My Balance Wheel”** activity in the client guide.

Debrief: depending on the size of the group, participants can share their balance wheels in small groups (two-to-three) or in the larger group; how do they envision their balance wheels changing over time (ex: having kids in the future; kids growing up).

Time:

- 20 - 25 minutes

Tips for Managing/Restoring Balance

- Reflect on what's working and what's not
- Talk with your employer
- Find people to help you
- Eat properly
- Exercise
- Get enough rest

Brainstorm other tips for managing/restoring balance. Have participants share personal examples.

Refer participants to the **“What's Working? What's Not?”** activity in the client guide.

In groups of two or three have participants:

- Discuss their experience of completing the activity.
- Talk about the things that need fixing and strengthening.

Time:

- 20 minutes

Summary

- Take time to learn workplace expectations
- Identify skills and attitudes needed for success
- Be a continuous learner
- Review your own performance regularly
- Actively manage your career
- Define what success means to you
- Strive for life-work balance

Summarize the topics discussed; try to weave in stories from the discussions that occurred. Remind clients that whether they're new to the workforce or seasoned professionals, success at work is something that everyone needs to continuously work on; self-reflection/assessment is key to being aware of how they are doing and how they can improve.

Time:

- 10 minutes



Thank participants for their time. Advise them where they can go to get further assistance

If desired, have participants complete a workshop evaluation form (see **Appendix A**)

Time:

- two-to-three minutes; more if an evaluation is being completed

Additional Tips and Strategies

- Focus workshop content based on the client or group's employment situation
 - Some clients may lack general employability skills
 - Others may be well-positioned in the workforce, looking for advancement
- Introduce Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi's "Flow," if appropriate and time permits
 - Highlight how flow can impact work/life balance and success at work
 - Explain that flow occurs by matching levels of skills and challenges
 - As skills develop, if challenge doesn't increase, flow diminishes
 - When boredom begins, it's time to look for new challenges
 - Conversely, anxiety results from too much challenge
 - Stress at work may indicate need for skill development

For More Information on Success in the Workplace

Career Resilience

www2.careers.govt.nz/6408.html

Short article from New Zealand provides 10 tips for developing career resilience

That Elusive Work-Life Balance!

www.natcon.org/archive/natcon/papers/natcon_papers_2005_e5.pdf

Examines work-life balance and introduces Csikszentmihalyi's work on "Flow"

Workplace Education Manitoba (WEM)

www.wem.mb.ca/

Provides comprehensive information about essential skills and workplace resources. See Navigating Workplace Documents: The Thinking Process in Resources/Learner Materials section

Workability: What You Need to Get and Keep a Job

www.alis.gov.ab.ca/pdf/cshop/workability.pdf

Developed to support clients with employment maintenance challenges. Describes skills and attitudes necessary to obtain/maintain work, followed by opportunities for individuals to reflect on their own examples/evidence.