Keep Your Job
Help for career advisors
Career Advisors and Tutors

Easy Reading Keep Your Job encourages adults with low literacy skills or English as a Second Language to seek the support of a career advisor or tutor to assist them in understanding the information within this resource. This publication, written at a Grade 4 reading level, will cover important topics such as

- what employers want
- building good work skills
- building good work attitudes
- workplace rights and responsibilities
- making sure your job is a good fit

Easy Reading Keep Your Job: Help for Career Advisors is a complementary online resource to help advisors and tutors support their clients in maintaining employment. It includes related exercises, provides notes and topics for discussion, optional activities and links to readily available resources.


Other Easy Reading products that may be of interest are

- Easy Reading Find a Job
- Easy Reading Find a Job: Help for Career Advisors
- Easy Reading Work and You Book 1: Make Some Choices
- Easy Reading Work and You Book 2: Decide on a Job
- Easy Reading Work and You: Help for Career Advisors
- Easy Reading Job Profiles
- Easy Reading Job Profiles: Help for Career Advisors

You can find these products at alis.alberta.ca/ERadvisors.

Check out these related resources on the Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website.

alis.alberta.ca/career
This section includes useful self-assessment tools and career planning resources and services.

alis.alberta.ca/occinfo
OCCinfo provides information on Alberta occupations and educational programs, including

- duties and working conditions
- educational and certification requirements
- employment outlook and advancement opportunities
- wage and salary ranges

This publication is available to download or order online at alis.alberta.ca/publications.

All photos in this booklet are for illustrative purposes only. They are not actual photos of any individuals mentioned.
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Introduction

About this guide

Who it’s for

This guide is the companion document to the Easy Reading publication *Keep Your Job*, which was developed for adult clients who read at a Grade 4 level. *Keep Your Job* helps clients build workplace skills and attitudes that will help them maintain employment.

Read this guide to learn about *Keep Your Job* and how to use it to help and support clients who have low literacy skills or who are learning English as a second language.

For details about the content and structure of *Keep Your Job*, see page 4.

Content and structure

With the exception of the introduction, the chapter and section headings in this guide parallel the headings used in *Keep Your Job*.

Each chapter begins with a short summary of the chapter contents. Each chapter also includes

- learning objectives
- general notes for advisors (as appropriate), including notes on any concepts related to workplace culture
- specific notes explaining how the material should be discussed with clients, including suggestions for optional activities (as appropriate)
- hyperlinked lists of supplementary information and resources (as appropriate)

Note: Some of the hyperlinked resources mentioned in this guide are not designed as easy reading material. However, they may contain useful information for your clients. You can download these resources at [alis.alberta.ca/publications](alis.alberta.ca/publications) or pick up copies at any Alberta Works Centre. To find a centre near you, go to [alis.alberta.ca/awc](alis.alberta.ca/awc).

The chapters Building Good Work Skills and Building Good Work Attitudes are the heart of this publication. In these chapters, each major subsection opens with a list of client learning objectives and page cross-references to relevant exercises in *Keep Your Job*. These exercises are designed to help clients improve their problem-solving abilities as well as their work-related skills and attitudes.

Unless otherwise indicated, page cross-references in these subsections refer to the *Keep Your Job* publication.
About *Keep Your Job*

**Who it’s for**

*Keep Your Job* is for adults who have low literacy skills or who are learning English as a second language. It can help these workers identify and develop the workplace skills and attitudes they need to maintain employment.

*Keep Your Job* encourages readers to seek the support of a career advisor or tutor to help them build the skills and attitudes they need to keep their jobs.

**How to use it**

*Keep Your Job* can be used as part of a larger career-planning effort.

It can also be used specifically for clients who have experienced difficulty in maintaining employment.

**Content and structure**

*Keep Your Job* includes six chapters, each of which is discussed in this guide:

- Let’s Start introduces clients to the contents of the book and how to use it.
- What Do Employers Want? sets out the characteristics of good workers who can help a workplace function effectively. It explains the concept of workplace culture and the importance of problem solving. Clients need to understand both of these elements if they wish to keep their jobs.
- Building Good Work Skills outlines four useful workplace skills:
  - body language
  - speaking (verbal communication)
  - teamwork
  - time management
- Building Good Work Attitudes outlines four useful workplace attitudes:
  - flexibility
  - honesty
  - professionalism
  - responsibility
- Workplace Rights and Responsibilities explores issues such as safety, wages, vacations, overtime and respect in the workplace.
• Making Sure Your Job Is a Good Fit helps clients assess whether their job suits them. It also suggests approaches and resources for finding a job that might be a better fit.

Most chapters in Keep Your Job include exercises to help clients understand the concepts that are being discussed and then apply them to their own lives.

Each subsection of the Building Good Work Skills and Building Good Work Attitudes chapters begins with a fictional story that adds interest and helps clients gain a deeper understanding of important concepts. The characters in each story work in jobs that are featured in the Easy Reading Job Profiles at alis.alberta.ca/easyreading. You may wish to refer clients to these job profiles so they can better understand the stories.

Icons

DEFINITIONS of terms that may be unfamiliar to clients are included in the Keep Your Job publication or in the online Easy Reading Dictionary at alis.alberta.ca/ERdictionary.

Terms that appear in bold black letters pertain to employment and occupations in general. These terms are defined in the Easy Reading Dictionary.

Terms that appear in colour are specific to Keep Your Job. These terms are marked with the dictionary icon and defined within the publication itself.

TIPS offer extra information to help clients complete a task successfully.

EXERCISES encourage clients to answer questions and think about their work skills and attitudes.
About the Easy Reading Series

This guide is part of the Easy Reading series for adults who have low literacy skills or who are learning English as a second language. Easy Reading publications are written at a Grade 2 to 4 reading level depending on the topic. Occasionally, the reading level may be higher because of the need to include difficult words that are essential to a particular occupation or situation. When difficult words are necessary, definitions are provided.

Easy Reading resources

The following Easy Reading products at alis.alberta.ca/ERadvisors may be of interest:

- Easy Reading Be Safe at Work
- Easy Reading Dictionary
- Easy Reading Employment Law Protects Workers
- Easy Reading Find a Job
- Easy Reading Job Profiles
- Easy Reading Work and You Book 1: Make Some Job Choices
- Easy Reading Work and You Book 2: Decide on a Job
- Easy Reading Work and You: Help for Career Advisors

Other resources

Check out these additional resources on the ALIS website:

- Career Planning at alis.alberta.ca/career includes useful self-assessment tools and career-planning resources and services.
- OCCinfo at alis.alberta.ca/occinfo provides information on Alberta occupations and educational programs. OCCinfo includes information on
doing and working conditions
- educational and certification requirements
- employment outlook and advancement opportunities
- wage and salary ranges
Let’s start

Chapter summary

Let’s start outlines why jobs are important and introduces the terms “skills” and “attitudes,” which are important for maintaining employment. It also introduces the format, content and icons used in *Keep Your Job*.

Objectives

- Introduce clients to the importance of having a job and knowing how to keep it.
- Introduce clients to the contents of *Keep Your Job*.
- Introduce clients to the icons that mark definitions, tips and exercises.

Notes for advisors

If you have Internet access, show clients the online *Easy Reading Dictionary* at alis.alberta.ca/ERdictionary.

Discussion with clients

Before your clients begin to read *Keep Your Job*, ask them to think about why it’s important to have a job. You may wish to record their answers. You can use these answers to motivate clients as they work through the exercises in the book.

Information and resources

ALIS publications at alis.alberta.ca/publications

- *Easy Reading Find a Job*
- *Job Smart: Tips for Staying Employed*
- *Workability: What You Need to Get & Keep a Job*
- *Working in Alberta: A Guide for Internationally Trained and Educated Immigrants*
- *Work Search Basics*

ALIS Tips at alis.alberta.ca/tips

- *Adding Value: Why It Pays to Help Your Employer Succeed*
- *Are You Job Smart?*
- *Getting and Keeping the Work You Want*

Other resources

- Alberta Works Centres at alis.alberta.ca/awc
- Alberta Career Information Hotline at alis.alberta.ca/hotline
What Do Employers Want?

Chapter summary

This chapter sets out four interrelated qualities that employers expect from good workers. It explores the components of each of these qualities and why they are important in the workplace.

Objectives

- Introduce clients to four key qualities that good employees need. These are
  - an understanding of workplace culture
  - an ability to solve problems
  - good work skills
  - good work attitudes

Notes for advisors

- *Keep Your Job* includes an entire chapter on building good work skills and another chapter on building good work attitudes.
  - Good work skills include communication skills, teamwork and time management. For ease of understanding at this literacy level, communication skills are divided into body language skills and speaking skills.
  - For clients who are learning English as a second language, emphasize that speaking skills do not mean knowing the language well.
  - Good work attitudes include flexibility, honesty, professionalism and responsibility.
- Because understanding workplace culture is so important, this concept is incorporated into many of the subsections in the Building Good Work Skills and Building Good Work Attitudes chapters.
  - Notes for advisors sections alert advisors that workplace culture will be discussed in a particular subsection.
- Because problem solving is so important, this concept is incorporated into many of the exercises in *Keep Your Job*. 
Discussion with clients

- Workplace culture is an important concept. Ask your clients to give an example of workplace culture to ensure they understand what this concept means. If the concept is too difficult, ask clients to give an example of a cultural difference. Explain that when people do something together that they think is normal, it is part of their culture. Different countries have different cultures. Different workplaces also have different cultures.

- Assure your clients that they will see many examples of workplace culture throughout this book.

- If your clients are concerned about their ability to solve problems, assure them that they will have chances to develop this skill throughout the book.

Information and resources

ALIS publications at alis.alberta.ca/publications

- Job Smart: Tips for Staying Employed
- Positive Works II
- Workability: What You Need to Get & Keep a Job

ALIS Tips at alis.alberta.ca/tips

- Adding Value: Why It Pays to Help Your Employer Succeed
- Avoid Workplace Traps
- Career Laddering: Making Positive Moves
- Do You Have the Skills Employers Want?
- How Does Your Attitude Measure Up?
- Moving from Self-Defeating to Powerful Thoughts
- Six Ways to Stand Out at Work
Building Good Work Skills

Chapter summary

This chapter deals with four useful workplace skills:

- body language
- speaking (verbal communication)
- teamwork
- time management

Examples and exercises help clients understand the importance of these skills and then apply them in their own lives.

Body-language skills

Client objectives and related exercises in *Keep Your Job*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client objectives</th>
<th>Related exercises</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify poor (negative) body language.</td>
<td>✅ Let’s look at Terry’s body-language skills, p. 9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Learn how poor body language is understood in the workplace.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Learn the elements of good (positive) body language.</td>
<td>✅ How are your body-language skills?, p. 12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Assess their own body-language skills.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Identify a body-language problem they may have.</td>
<td>✅ Let’s work on your body-language skills, p. 13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Think of solutions to this problem.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notes for advisors

- Demonstrations are ideal for this topic. Show or have clients demonstrate body language such as eye-rolling or watch-checking.
Example: The story of Terry and Grace

Notes for advisors

• The story of Terry and Grace frames Terry’s problem by showing how her body language is misunderstood by her co-worker, Grace.

• Body language has a cultural component, as Terry makes clear in the example.

• This story includes the following workplace culture components: a firm handshake, eye contact, watch-checking, frowning and yawning.

Discussion with clients

• If appropriate, ask your clients if they are puzzled by body language or reactions to their own body language in the workplace.

• Stress that while some body language is clear, much of it can be misunderstood. For example, it is clear that eye-rolling indicates contempt or disbelief, but watch-checking can be interpreted as boredom instead of a concern for being late.

• Allow clients to practice good and bad handshakes with you.

• Allow clients to role-play the dialogue between Terry and Grace with you.

Exercise: Let’s look at Terry’s body-language skills

Objectives

In this exercise, clients will

• identify poor body language

• learn how poor body language is understood in the workplace

Notes for advisors

• The story example continues after this exercise. In the example, Grace models good body language when she speaks to Terry.
Discussion with clients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Terry’s body language</th>
<th>Why are Terry’s body-language skills a problem for the workplace?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Terry has a weak handshake.</td>
<td>Grace thinks Terry doesn’t like her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Terry looks away.</td>
<td>Grace thinks Terry isn’t paying attention.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Terry yawns or looks at her watch.</td>
<td>Grace thinks Terry is bored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Terry frowns as she works.</td>
<td>Grace thinks Terry disagrees with her.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Terry never smiles.</td>
<td>Grace thinks Terry does not like working with her.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Discuss whether Terry should keep her job.
Exercise: How are your body-language skills?

Objectives
In this exercise, clients will
• learn the elements of good body language
• assess their own body-language skills

Notes for advisors
• This exercise addresses head-nodding, which is used in the workplace to indicate that someone understands or agrees with what is being said.

Discussion with clients
• Stress that head-nodding is used only when someone actually does understand or agree. Indiscriminate head-nodding can lead to other misunderstandings.

Exercise: Let’s work on your body-language skills

Objectives
In this exercise, clients will
• identify a body-language problem they may have
• think of solutions to this problem

Notes for advisors
• If your clients can’t come up with examples of their own body-language problems, ask them if they ever feel they are misunderstood at work, even when they don’t say anything.

Discussion with clients
• Discuss the body-language problem and the proposed solutions presented in the exercise. Help clients identify their own body-language problems and think of ways to fix these problems.

Information and resources
ALIS publications at alis.alberta.ca/publications
• Easy Reading Find a Job

Other resources at alis.alberta.ca/tips
• Your Image & Learning from the Interview
# Speaking skills

## Client objectives and related exercises in *Keep Your Job*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client objectives</th>
<th>Related exercises</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify poor speaking skills and ways to improve these skills.</td>
<td>🟢 Let’s look at Jim’s speaking skills, p. 15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Learn how poor speaking skills create problems in the workplace.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Learn the elements of good verbal communication.</td>
<td>🟢 How are your speaking skills?, p. 17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Assess their own speaking skills.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Identify a speaking problem they may have.</td>
<td>🟢 Let’s work on your speaking skills, p. 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Think of solutions to this problem.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example: The story of Abdul and Jim

Notes for advisors

• The story of Abdul and Jim introduces the issue of workplace sexual harassment through the telling of inappropriate jokes. The fact that Abdul would be embarrassed or reluctant to repeat such jokes to his family is a clear measure of their inappropriateness.

• Anger management and bullying are secondary issues in Abdul and Jim’s story. Workplace bullying can include withholding information or giving wrong information, being rude, making offensive jokes and using offensive language.

• For clients who are learning English as a second language, re-emphasize that the verbal communication and speaking skills addressed in this section do not relate to actual language knowledge.

• This story includes the following workplace culture component: understanding that rude jokes are inappropriate for the workplace.

Discussion with clients

• Depending on the age or situation of your clients, have them think about the people they associate with at work. Discuss the consequences of these associations.

• Discuss workplace bullying. See page 17 of this guide for resources.

Exercise: Let’s look at Jim’s speaking skills

Objectives

In this exercise, clients will

• identify poor speaking skills and ways to improve these skills

• learn how poor speaking skills create problems in the workplace

Notes for advisors

• The story example continues after this exercise. In the example, Abdul’s manager gives him feedback about his speaking skills and explains why Jim’s speaking skills were inappropriate for the workplace.
Discussion with clients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jim's speaking skills</th>
<th>Why are Jim’s speaking skills a problem for the workplace?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Jim tells rude jokes.</td>
<td>Jim's jokes make his co-workers, especially the women, uncomfortable.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Jim sends customers to the wrong place.</td>
<td>This can make customers angry, and angry customers won’t buy things at the store.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Jim won’t ask for help or information about using the forklift.</td>
<td>Jim causes damage that costs the employer money.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Discuss whether Jim should keep his job.

Exercise: How are your speaking skills?

Objectives

In this exercise, clients will

• learn the elements of good verbal communication

• assess their own speaking skills

Notes for advisors

• Asking someone to repeat a question or direction can seem impolite. However, workplace safety can depend on it.

• Intonation is important. The pitch or tone of one’s voice can be used to differentiate between different words. Intonation can also be used to determine attitudes and emotion. Help your clients understand that how they say something can be just as important as what they say.
Exercise: Let’s work on your speaking skills

Objectives
In this exercise, clients will
- identify a speaking problem they may have
- think of solutions to this problem

Notes for advisors
- If your clients can’t come up with examples of their own speaking problems, ask them if they ever feel they are misunderstood at work, even when they try to speak clearly.

Discussion with clients
- Discuss the speaking skills problem and the proposed solutions presented in the exercise. Help clients identify problems with their own speaking skills and think of ways to fix these problems.

Information and resources
ALIS publications at alis.alberta.ca/publications
- Your Rights and Responsibilities at Work

ALIS Tips at alis.alberta.ca/tips
- Bullies at Work: What to Know, What You Can Do
- Communicating With Confidence
- Coping With Stress at Work
- Employers: What You Need to Know About Bullying in the Workplace
- First Job or New Job? What You Need to Know About Employment Standards
- Handling People Problems at Work
- Sexual Harassment: What You Need to Know
- Talking It Out – Resolving Conflict at Work
# Teamwork skills

## Client objectives and related exercises in *Keep Your Job*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client objectives</th>
<th>Related exercises</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify poor teamwork skills and ways to improve these skills.</td>
<td>💡 Let’s look at Anna’s teamwork skills, p. 21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Learn how poor teamwork creates problems in the workplace.</td>
<td>🔄 How are your teamwork skills?, p. 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Learn the elements of good teamwork.</td>
<td>🔄 Let’s work on your teamwork skills, p. 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Assess their own teamwork skills.</td>
<td>🔄 How are your teamwork skills?, p. 23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Identify a teamwork problem they may have.</td>
<td>🔄 Let’s work on your teamwork skills, p. 24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Think of solutions to this problem.</td>
<td>🔄 How are your teamwork skills?, p. 23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## Example: The story of René and Anna

### Notes for advisors

- Anna’s reluctance to befriend co-workers is based on the fear that they will gossip about her personal life.
- Gossiping is a form of workplace bullying. See page 17 of this guide for resources on bullying.
- This story includes the following workplace culture components: observing how other workers accomplish a task successfully and modelling this behaviour.

### Discussion with clients

- Discuss how gossip can be detrimental in the workplace.
- Suggest and discuss appropriate topics for small talk.
Exercise: Let’s look at Anna’s teamwork skills

Objectives

In this exercise, clients will

• identify poor teamwork skills and ways to improve these skills
• learn how poor teamwork creates problems in the workplace

Notes for advisors

• The story example continues after this exercise. In the example, René gives Anna feedback that will help her be a team player.

Discussion with clients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Anna's teamwork skills</th>
<th>Why are Anna’s teamwork skills a problem for the workplace?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Anna doesn’t chat with her co-workers.</td>
<td>Co-workers think Anna is unfriendly.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Anna doesn’t listen when co-workers try to teach her the song.</td>
<td>The children don’t know what to do. They won’t clean up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Anna doesn’t ask for help.</td>
<td>Anna makes life harder for herself. The children feel unsure and don’t listen because Anna won’t do things the way they’re used to.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Anna doesn’t help her co-workers.</td>
<td>A workplace is less friendly when co-workers don’t help each other.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Discuss whether Anna should keep her job.
Exercise: How are your teamwork skills?

Objectives
In this exercise, clients will
• learn the elements of good teamwork
• assess their own teamwork skills

Notes for advisors
• This exercise touches on workplace tolerance and its counterpart, discrimination.
• If your clients have difficulty understanding the term “point of view,” the problem presented in the following exercise, Let’s Work on Your Teamwork Skills, can help to illustrate the term.

Discussion with clients
• Discuss the elements of teamwork that are raised in the exercise.

Exercise: Let’s work on your teamwork skills

Objectives
In this exercise, clients will
• identify a teamwork problem they may have
• think of solutions to this problem

Notes for advisors
• The exercise introduces teamwork within the context of accommodating a co-worker who has a disability. A list of related resources is provided.
• If your clients can’t come up with examples of their own teamwork problems, ask them if they ever feel they are ignored or left out of group activities.

Discussion with clients
• Discuss the teamwork problem presented in the exercise and the issues related to workforce diversity. Point out that teamwork sometimes means reserving judgment about another person and considering a situation from a co-worker’s perspective.
• Help clients identify their own problems with teamwork and think of ways to fix these problems.
Information and resources

**ALIS publications at alis.alberta.ca/publications**

- *Employing a Diverse Workforce: Making It Work*
- *Let’s Talk: A Guide to Resolving Workplace Conflicts*
- *Your Rights and Responsibilities at Work*

**ALIS Tips at alis.alberta.ca/tips**

- Accommodations – Working With Your Disability
- Are You Job Smart?
- Human Rights and You: What Can Employers Ask?
- Marketing Your Employability Skills
- Overcoming Job Challenges
- Succeeding in the Workplace as a Person With a Disability

**Other resources**

- Alberta Human Rights Commission at albertahumanrights.ab.ca
Time-management skills

Client objectives and related exercises in *Keep Your Job*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client objectives</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify poor time-management skills and ways to improve these skills.</td>
<td>✔️ Let’s look at Nelson’s time-management skills, p. 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Learn how poor time-management skills create problems in the workplace.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Learn the elements of good time management.</td>
<td>✔️ How are your time-management skills?, p. 29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Assess their own time-management skills.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Identify a time-management problem they may have.</td>
<td>✔️ Let’s work on your time-management, p. 30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Think of solutions to this problem.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Example: The story of Nelson and Emma**

**Notes for advisors**

- The story of Nelson and Emma illustrates the importance of time management in keeping a business running smoothly.
- A secondary issue is that employees have the right to information about the rules of their workplace. They also have a responsibility to ask for this information and to communicate with their employers when problems arise.
- This story includes the following workplace culture component: letting your employer know if you will be late or absent.

**Discussion with clients**

- Time management is part of being organized. Brainstorm with your clients the ways in which they organize themselves. Do they make lists or schedules? Prepare ahead of time?
- Ensure that your clients know how to reach their employers.
- Ensure that your clients know they can ask their employers for information, such as a copy of the employee handbook.
Exercise: Let’s look at Nelson’s time-management skills

Objectives
In this exercise, clients will
• identify poor time-management skills and ways to improve these skills
• learn how poor time-management skills create problems in the workplace

Discussion with clients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nelson’s time-management skills</th>
<th>Why are Nelson’s time-management skills a problem for the workplace? What can he do to fix the problem?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Nelson stays up too late. This makes him sleepy the next day.</td>
<td>Nelson can go to bed earlier on nights before he has to work.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Nelson’s alarm clock doesn’t work.</td>
<td>Nelson can buy a new alarm clock. Or he can buy two alarm clocks!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Nelson doesn’t let his employer know that he is late.</td>
<td>Nelson can call his employer.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Discuss whether Nelson should keep his job.
Exercise: How are your time-management skills?

Objectives
In this exercise, clients will

- learn the elements of good time management
- assess their own time-management skills

Notes for advisors
- Although the focus is time management, this exercise also reinforces the importance of good communication skills.

Discussion with clients
- Ensure that your clients know that they must communicate with their employer when their illness or lateness will disrupt the employer’s business.

Exercise: Let’s work on your time-management skills

Objectives
In this exercise, clients will

- identify a time-management problem they may have
- think of solutions to this problem

Notes for advisors
- If your clients can’t come up with examples of their own time-management problems, ask them if they ever feel rushed or if others constantly urge them to hurry up.

Discussion with clients
- Discuss the time-management problem and the proposed solutions presented in the exercise. Help clients identify their own time-management problems and think of ways to fix these problems.

Information and resources
ALIS publications at alis.alberta.ca/publications

- Workability: What You Need to Get & Keep a Job

ALIS Tips at alis.alberta.ca/tips

- Time-Saving Tools for Busy Lives
Building Good Work Attitudes

Chapter summary

This chapter deals with four useful workplace attitudes:

- flexibility
- honesty
- professionalism
- responsibility

Examples and exercises help clients understand the importance of these attitudes and then apply them in their own lives.

A flexible attitude

Client objectives and related exercises in *Keep Your Job*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client objectives</th>
<th>Related exercises</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify poor workplace flexibility.</td>
<td>Let’s look at how flexible Oscar is, p. 33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Learn how inflexibility creates problems in the workplace.</td>
<td>Ways to think about being flexible, p. 35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Learn the elements of workplace flexibility.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Assess their own ability to be flexible.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Identify a problem they may have with being flexible.</td>
<td>Let’s think about being flexible at your job, p. 36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Think of solutions to this problem.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Example: Oscar’s story

Notes for advisors

• Oscar’s story underscores the importance of problem-solving skills.

• This story includes the following workplace culture component: learning is part of working.

Discussion with clients

• Allow clients to role-play the dialogue between Oscar and his boss with you. Model good body language and verbal skills.

• Discuss how Oscar’s one-week delay in dealing with his problem meant more stress and more reports to do.

• When Oscar was first hired, he was not required to use a computer. Point out to your clients that if their job changes, they can ask for training.

Exercise: Let’s look at how flexible Oscar is

Objectives

In this exercise, clients will

• identify poor workplace flexibility

• learn how inflexibility creates problems in the workplace

Notes for advisors

• Inflexibility can be a symptom of a larger issue. In Oscar’s case, he may seem inflexible when the real problem is that he is at a loss for how to solve the problem. Providing him with the right tools and support can help him to be flexible in the face of change.
## Discussion with clients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Oscar’s reaction</th>
<th>Why is Oscar’s reaction a problem for the workplace? What can he do to fix the problem?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Oscar is afraid of change. He is stressed because he does not know how to do things.</td>
<td>Oscar can speak to his employer about his concerns. His employer can show him how to do things and help him get the training he needs.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Oscar does not know how to use a computer. He is afraid to learn new skills.</td>
<td>Oscar can ask his kids to show him what to do. Oscar can take a computer course. He can ask his company to pay for a computer course. Oscar can try to think about learning new skills as an opportunity to do his job better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Oscar’s stress about doing things in new ways is causing him to lose sleep.</td>
<td>Oscar can take a walk before bedtime to relax.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Discuss whether Oscar should keep his job.
Exercise: Ways to think about being flexible

Objectives

In this exercise, clients will

• learn the elements of workplace flexibility
• assess their own ability to be flexible

Notes for advisors

• This exercise introduces the term “feedback.” Point out to your clients that earlier stories in Keep Your Job also provided examples of feedback:
  ○ On page 10 of Keep Your Job, Grace gives feedback to her co-worker, Terry.
  ○ On page 16, Abdul gets feedback from his manager.
  ○ On page 22, René gives feedback to her new day-care worker, Anna.

Discussion with clients

• Discuss the elements of flexibility that are raised in the exercise.
• Discuss how constructive feedback can help employees consider new ways of doing things.

Exercise: Let’s think about being flexible at your job

Objectives

In this exercise, clients will

• identify a problem they may have with being flexible
• think of solutions to this problem

Notes for advisors

• If your clients can’t come up with examples of their own inflexibility, ask them if they’ve ever been told that they never want to try anything new, such as different food or movies or different ways of doing things.

Discussion with clients

• Discuss the problem presented in the exercise and explain how the proposed solutions demonstrate a flexible attitude. Help clients identify their own problems with being flexible and think of ways to fix these problems.
Information and resources

ALIS publications at alis.alberta.ca/publications

- My Choices, My Work, My Life
- Positive Works II
- Workability: What You Need to Get & Keep a Job
- Your Rights and Responsibilities at Work

ALIS Tips at alis.alberta.ca/tips

- A Positive Attitude Will Help You Learn
- Coping With Stress at Work
- Five Fear-Busting Strategies
- From Dreams to Action: Setting SMART Goals
- How to Study Effectively
- Learning to Enhance Your Career
- Many Training Paths Develop Skills and Knowledge
- Moving from Self-Defeating to Powerful Thoughts
- Overcoming Defenses Against Learning
- What’s Your Learning Style?
An honest attitude

Client objectives and related exercises in *Keep Your Job*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client objectives</th>
<th>Related exercises</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify workplace dishonesty.</td>
<td>![Checkmark] Let’s look at how honest Sue is, p. 39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Learn why dishonesty is a problem in the workplace.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Learn the elements of workplace honesty.</td>
<td>![Checkmark] Ways to think about being honest, p. 40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Assess their own attitudes about honesty.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Identify a problem they may have with being honest.</td>
<td>![Checkmark] Let’s think about being honest at your job, p. 41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Think of solutions to this problem.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example: The story of Kari and Sue

Notes for advisors

- This example points out that dishonesty is much bigger than taking the company truck for personal business.

- The example also raises a number of secondary issues:
  - Sue’s attitude is unprofessional and irresponsible as well as dishonest.
  - Sue is not being a team player.

- This story includes the following workplace culture component: telling your employer about workplace dishonesty.

Discussion with clients

- Sue clearly doesn’t care about her work. Discuss why showing up for work when you don’t care is not being honest.
Exercise: Let’s look at how honest Sue is

Objectives

In this exercise, clients will
• identify workplace dishonesty
• learn why dishonesty is a problem in the workplace

Notes for advisors

• Theft is often thought of as stealing physical objects. Employers also consider theft to include using company property or company time for personal reasons.

Discussion with clients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sue’s actions</th>
<th>Why are Sue’s actions a problem for the workplace?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Sue uses the company truck for personal business.</td>
<td>Sue is stealing company gas and time. Sue’s shirking makes more work for Kari.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Sue probably stole $20 from Kari.</td>
<td>Kari is out the money.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Sue lies about watering the roses.</td>
<td>It costs the company money when plants aren’t properly taken care of and have to be replaced.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Sue doesn’t care about her work.</td>
<td>It’s hard for the company to trust Sue.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Discuss what kinds of things are considered theft in the workplace.
• Discuss what kinds of behaviour are considered dishonest in the workplace.
• Discuss whether Sue should keep her job.
Exercise: Ways to think about being honest

Objectives
In this exercise, clients will
• learn the elements of workplace honesty
• assess their own attitudes about honesty

Notes for advisors
• Maintaining confidentiality about an employer’s customers and business is often a condition of employment. Breaking this confidence is a breach of trust. This is dishonest.

Discussion with clients
• Discuss confidentiality.
• Discuss the other elements of workplace honesty that are raised in the exercise.

Exercise: Let’s think about being honest at your job

Objectives
In this exercise, clients will
• identify a problem they may have with being honest
• think of solutions to this problem

advisors
• If your clients can’t come up with examples of their own dishonesty, ask them if they care about their job. If they don’t, explore why this is so. Or ask them if they’ve ever witnessed dishonesty at work.

Discussion with clients
• You may wish to define “call in sick” for clients who are learning English as a second language.

Information and resources
ALIS publications at alis.alberta.ca/publications
• Let’s Talk: A Guide to Resolving Workplace Conflicts
• Workability: What You Need to Get & Keep a Job
• Your Rights and Responsibilities at Work

ALIS Tips at alis.alberta.ca/tips
• Communicating With Confidence
• How Does Your Attitude Measure Up?
• Six Ways to Stand Out at Work
A professional attitude

Client objectives and related exercises in *Keep Your Job*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client objectives</th>
<th>Related exercises</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify poor professional attitudes.</td>
<td>✔ Let’s look at how professional Tom is, p. 43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Learn how a lack of professionalism creates problems in the workplace.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Learn the elements of professionalism.</td>
<td>✔ Ways to think about being professional, p. 44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Assess their own professionalism.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Identify a problem they may have with being professional.</td>
<td>✔ Let’s think about being professional at your job, p. 45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Think of solutions to this problem.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example: The story of Hafid, Sara and Tom

Notes for advisors

- Your clients may find Tom’s behaviour odd. Part of Tom’s difficulty may be that he is shy and doesn’t want to mingle. Perhaps his job is not a good fit?

- This story includes the following workplace culture components: adopting the company dress code and interacting with customers.

Discussion with clients

- Discuss the possibility that Tom’s job is not a good fit for him. (This topic is addressed in more detail in the Making sure your job is a good fit chapter on page 54.)
Exercise: Let’s look at how professional Tom is

Objectives
In this exercise, clients will
• identify poor professional attitudes
• identify ways for Tom to fix his problems

Notes for advisors
• The story example continues after this exercise. In the example, Hafid gives Tom feedback and Tom agrees to try to be more professional.

Discussion with clients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tom’s actions</th>
<th>Why are Tom’s actions a problem for the workplace? What can he do to fix the problem?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Tom forgets to put on a clean apron for customers.</td>
<td>Tom can put up a sign to remind himself.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Tom doesn’t make the food look nice on the plate.</td>
<td>Tom can ask Sara to show him how to do this.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Tom can look at books or at pictures on the Internet to see how other cooks make their plates look nice.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Tom complains about what his employer is asking him to do.</td>
<td>Tom can think about why his employer is asking him to change. His employer wants to help Tom do his job better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Tom does not talk to the customers.</td>
<td>Tom can learn more about what the customers want to know.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If Tom does not like talking to people, he can tell Hafid that he only wants to cook.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Discuss whether Tom should keep his job.
Exercise: Ways to think about being professional

Objectives
In this exercise, clients will

• learn the elements of professionalism
• assess their own professionalism

Notes for advisors
• Making a point of being informed about their company’s history, traditions and values can help clients act professional.
• While it’s OK to make a comment about a rush of customers or an extra-long shift, constant complaining wears down morale. It can also feed people’s own feelings of negativity.

Discussion with clients
• Discuss the effect that excessive complaining can have on workplace morale.
• Discuss why dressing appropriately for the workplace is an important part of being professional.

Exercise: Let’s think about being professional at your job

Objectives
In this exercise, clients will

• identify a problem they may have with being professional
• think of solutions to this problem

Discussion with clients
• Discuss why familiarity with their company’s history and traditions is an important part of being professional.
• Discuss how body language and speaking skills can make people seem unprofessional.
• Discuss how teamwork is part of being professional.

Information and resources
ALIS publications at alis.alberta.ca/publications
• Job Smart: Tips for Staying Employed
• Positive Works II
• Workability: What You Need to Get & Keep a Job

ALIS Tips at alis.alberta.ca/tips
• Are You Job Smart?
• Avoid Workplace Traps
• Talking it Out – Resolving Conflict at Work
A responsible attitude

Client objectives and related attitudes in *Keep Your Job*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client objectives</th>
<th>Related exercises</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Identify irresponsible workplace attitudes.</td>
<td>✅ Let’s look at how responsible Tanya is, p. 47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Learn how irresponsibility creates problems in the workplace.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Learn the elements of workplace responsibility.</td>
<td>✓ Ways to think about being responsible, p. 48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Assess their own ability to be responsible.</td>
<td>✅ Let’s think about being responsible at your job, p. 49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Identify a problem they may have with being responsible.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Think of solutions to this problem.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example: The story of Sharon and Tanya

Notes for advisors

- Tanya’s irresponsible attitude encompasses elements of dishonesty. She lies about using the computer and about locking the cage. When she complains online, she is acting unprofessionally. When she does her work poorly and leaves a mess for Tanya, she is not being a team player.
- This story includes the following workplace culture component: telling your employer about irresponsible behaviour.

Discussion with clients

- Ask your clients to find examples of poor teamwork, a lack of professionalism and dishonesty in Sharon and Tanya’s story.
Exercise: Let’s look at how responsible Tanya is

Objectives
In this exercise, clients will
• identify irresponsible workplace attitudes
• learn how irresponsibility creates problems for the workplace

Notes for advisors
• The story example continues after this exercise. In the example, Sharon informs the vet about Tanya’s irresponsible behaviour.

Discussion with clients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tanya’s actions</th>
<th>Why are Tanya’s actions a problem for the workplace?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Tanya does not lock the dog’s cage properly.</td>
<td>The dog could have hurt or even killed the cat.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>It took time to get the dog back into the cage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Other customers could hear the dog barking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This could scare them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Tanya does not clean the tools properly.</td>
<td>This is unsafe for the animals and for the people who work with the animals.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If customers saw the dirty tools, they would want to take their pets somewhere else, where it was clean and safe.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Tanya blames her mistakes on Sharon.</td>
<td>Tanya does not want to learn to do better.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sharon doesn’t trust Tanya anymore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sharon may leave the clinic because she does not like working with Tanya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Tanya uses the office computer to talk to her friends.</td>
<td>Tanya is using company time and office equipment for personal use. This is dishonest.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tanya says bad things about the vet.</td>
<td>Tanya can hurt the vet’s business by saying things that are not appropriate and not true.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

• Discuss whether Tanya should keep her job.
Exercise: Ways to think about being responsible

Objectives
In this exercise, clients will

• learn the elements of workplace responsibility
• assess their own ability to be responsible

Notes for advisors

• This exercise introduces the notion of workplace safety.
• The exercise also introduces the issue of substance abuse, which relates to personal health as well as to workplace safety. For resources related to workplace health and safety, see page 42 of this guide.

Discussion with clients

• Discuss the exercise and the responsible attitudes it outlines.
• Discuss why using drugs or alcohol in the workplace is inappropriate and dangerous.

Exercise: Let’s think about being responsible at your job

Objectives
In this exercise, clients will

• identify a problem they may have with being responsible
• think of solutions to this problem

Discussion with clients

• Discuss how having a good attitude can help people find constructive ways to deal with workplace stress.
• Discuss the various elements that constitute a responsible attitude.

Information and resources

ALIS publications at alis.alberta.ca/publications

• Job Smart: Tips for Staying Employed
• Positive Works II
• Workability: What You Need to Get & Keep a Job

ALIS Tips at alis.alberta.ca/tips

• Are You Job Smart?
• Coping With Stress at Work
• How Does Your Attitude Measure Up?
• Moving from Self-Defeating to Positive Thoughts
Workplace Rights and Responsibilities

Chapter summary

This chapter introduces clients to laws that protect their rights as workers and ensure that they are treated fairly and with respect. One of these laws is the Alberta Human Rights Act, which protects Albertans from discrimination on the basis of characteristics such as religion, age, disability or skin colour. Another is the Employment Standards Code, which sets out rules with regard to wages and pay, vacations, overtime and other workplace issues.

The Occupational Health and Safety Act legislates workplace safety. This act is not specifically mentioned in Keep Your Job. However, clients are provided with contact information for the ministry responsible for administering the act.

Objectives

• Introduce clients to the workplace rights and responsibilities covered by the following Alberta laws:
  ○ Alberta Human Rights Act
  ○ Employment Standards Code
  ○ Occupational Health and Safety Act

Notes for advisors

• This is the only chapter that does not include a story-based example. Nonetheless, the concepts of rights, respect and safety in the workplace are important. Ensure that your clients understand these concepts and how they affect them as employees.

• Ensure that your clients understand what avenues are open to them if they find themselves in job situations where they are treated unfairly or disrespectfully.

• Ensure that your clients understand their rights to a safe workplace, and that they know what to do to protect themselves from workplace hazards.

• Ensure that your clients know where to find more information about workplace rights and safety.

Discussion with clients

• Keep Your Job identifies a number of ways in which the Alberta Human Rights Act protects Albertans from discrimination. Discuss other rights and protections provided by the act. These can include protection from discrimination on the basis of family or marital status, race, gender and sexual orientation.

• Discuss the rights and protections provided by the Employment Standards Code.

• Discuss the rights and protections provided by the Occupational Health and Safety Act.
Information and resources

ALIS publications at alis.alberta.ca/publications

• Easy Reading Be Safe at Work
• Easy Reading Employment Law Protects Workers
• Employing a Diverse Workforce: Making It Work
• X-treme Safety: A Survival Guide for New and Young Workers
• Your Rights and Responsibilities at Work

ALIS Tips at alis.alberta.ca/tips

• Accommodations – Working With Your Disability
• Are You Safe at Your Job?
• Bullies at Work: What to Know, What You Can Do
• Disclosure: What to Say About Your Disability – and When
• First Job or New Job? What You Need to Know About Employment Standards
• Human Rights and You: What Can Employers Ask?
• Sexual Harassment: What You Need to Know
• Succeeding in the Workplace as a Person With a Disability

Other resources

• Alberta Human Rights Commission at albertahumanrights.ab.ca
Making Sure Your Job Is a Good Fit

Chapter summary

It is difficult to keep a job that is not a good fit. This chapter helps clients identify what makes a job a good fit and points them to resources they can use to find and keep a job that suits them. It introduces clients to the idea of lifelong learning as a valuable technique for keeping their job.

Client objective and related exercise in *Keep Your Job*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Client objectives</th>
<th>Related exercise</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Determine whether their current job is a good fit.</td>
<td>Make sure your job is a good fit, p. 55</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Exercise: Make sure your job is a good fit**

Notes for advisors

- The sole exercise in this chapter asks clients to evaluate the fit of their job. The final three questions focus on human rights (respect), employee rights and employee safety. Clients should feel they can answer “Yes” to all three questions.

Discussion with clients

- Ask your clients to think about what makes a job a good fit. Discuss their work preferences. Discuss the qualifications, skills and experience they’ll need to find a job that suits them—and to keep it.
- Help your clients think about ways to incorporate lifelong learning as part of everyday living.
- Have your clients write down what they are good at. This is a positive way to complete their learning about how to keep their job.
Information and resources

ALIS publications at alis.alberta.ca/publications

- *Easy Reading Work and You Book 1: Make Some Job Choices*
- *Easy Reading Work and You Book 2: Decide on a Job*
- *Easy Reading Work and You: Help for Career Advisors*
- *Job Smart: Tips for Staying Employed*
- *My Choices, My Work, My Life*
- *Workability: What You Need to Get & Keep a Job*

ALIS Tips at alis.alberta.ca/tips

- A Positive Attitude Will Help You Learn
- Find Work That “Fits”
- From Dreams to Action: Setting SMART Goals
- Handling Challenges: Dealing With Things You Can’t Change
- How to Study Effectively
- Learning to Enhance Your Career
- Many Training Paths Develop Skills and Knowledge
- Overcoming Defences Against Learning
- Parting Company – Leaving a Job Without Burning Bridges
- What’s Your Learning Style?

Other resources

- Work Right at work.alberta.ca/workright/
Resources

Alberta Government Publications

In Alberta, you can download or order print resources free of charge. Some of these resources are not designed as easy reading material. However, they may contain useful information for your clients. Get them online at alis.alberta.ca/publications. Or pick up copies at any Alberta Works Centre.

Alberta Learning Information Service (ALIS) website

alis.alberta.ca

- Easy Reading: Help for Career Advisors at alis.alberta.ca/ERadvisors
- Job Seekers at alis.alberta.ca/jobsearch
- OCCinfo at alis.alberta.ca/occinfo
- ALIS Tips at alis.alberta.ca/tips

Alberta Career Information Hotline

Call 780-422-4266 in Edmonton or 1-800-661-3753 toll-free.

Alberta Works Centres

To find a centre near you, call the Alberta Career Information Hotline or go to Alberta Works Centres at alis.alberta.ca/awc.