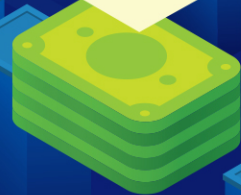


# Career Explorations

Discovering Your Path to Career Success

The Development Team at B.E. Publishing  
and Joy Tavano



TECHNOLOGY

FINANCE

HEALTHCARE

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# Career Explorations

First Edition

**Authors**

The Development Team at B.E. Publishing  
and Joy Tavano



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# Career Explorations

First Edition

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## Career Explorations

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# Introduction

## Welcome to Career Explorations

In today's rapidly evolving digital world, understanding the skills and preparation needed to lay the foundation of your career path is essential. Beginning a career is about more than simply finding a job. It takes carefully reflecting on your skills and values, articulating specific career goals, and developing a plan to meet those goals to achieve success.

This text will lead you to an understanding of some of the key principles surrounding pursuing a career and entering the working world. You will learn what motivates individuals to work, how to develop the most essential workplace skills, how to navigate the job application process, and more. Along the way, you will also be challenged to apply what you have learned to your own life, building a career portfolio highlighting your unique personality, strengths, experiences, and successes.

**Career Explorations** is part of the **Skills for Life CTE Series**, helping connect classroom learning to a lifetime of real-world success. In this text, you will build core employability skills, examine the landscape of education and career training, and develop an understanding of your own interests and abilities on your way to pursuing a career you are passionate about. From researching job opportunities to planning for your financial future, this text will prepare you with the career principles and skills you will use in the classroom, the workplace, and beyond.

**Skills for Life**  
CTE SERIES

## Features

This text contains a variety of features to enhance your understanding of concepts related to the world of work. As new information is introduced, making connections to practical, real-world examples reinforces prior learning. To help apply what you have learned about successful career preparation, this text guides you in the creation of a career portfolio through a series of hands-on computer applications lessons and other creative learning assignments in each chapter.

## Real-World Examples

To help bring career concepts to life, each chapter is infused with real-world examples. The text includes references to a wide range of possible paths available to young professionals to connect concepts like skill building and career training to your own life. Each individual's career journey is unique, and the examples provided will guide you in discovering what matters most to you and your future career.

## Application and Evaluation

Key vocabulary terms are bolded throughout the text, and clear definitions provide deeper understanding of career concepts. Each chapter concludes with a series of questions that enable you to evaluate and apply your knowledge. Reading prompts, research opportunities, and other assignments challenge you to review and expand your knowledge of career preparation and professionalism.

## Career Portfolio

Across a series of hands-on computer applications projects concluding each chapter, you will be tasked to research career topics and create a variety of professional documents, such as a resume, cover letter, interest inventory, personal budget, and more. These projects will not only challenge you to use your skills in word processing, spreadsheets, presentations, and other key workplace applications to reflect on what you have learned, but will also form the basis of a complete career portfolio showcasing your work, personal brand, and abilities to potential employers.

## Spotlighting Careers

Throughout this text, each chapter explores jobs related to one of the 16 career clusters included in the National Career Clusters Framework. From Finance to STEM to Health Science, each career cluster is highlighted in the Career Connections section. Career Spotlight pages, meanwhile, provide a detailed overview of a popular job within each cluster, including the necessary skills and required education and training those interested in the career should possess.

### PRECISION EXAMS by youscience

This book correlates to the **Precision Exams Certification for Preparing for College and Careers** and **21st Century Success Skills**. Content from this book aligns to the Standards, Objectives, and Indicators from Precision Exams, enabling you to earn certification demonstrating your proficiency in the skills and concepts required to enter college and start a career. The Precision Exams and the Career Skills™ Certification, Exams, and Standards are the property of Youscience. For more information on certification, visit [youscience.com/student-certifications](https://youscience.com/student-certifications).

To view the standards correlations for this text, visit [bepublishing.com](https://bepublishing.com).

## Understanding the Format of this Book

Career Explorations is organized into four units and 16 chapters. The following is a brief explanation of the individual sections that make up each chapter in this book. It is recommended that you read this section to become familiar with the format of this book.

## Career Connections

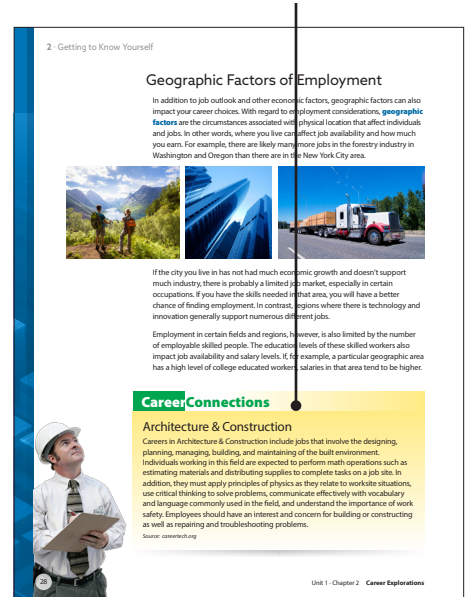
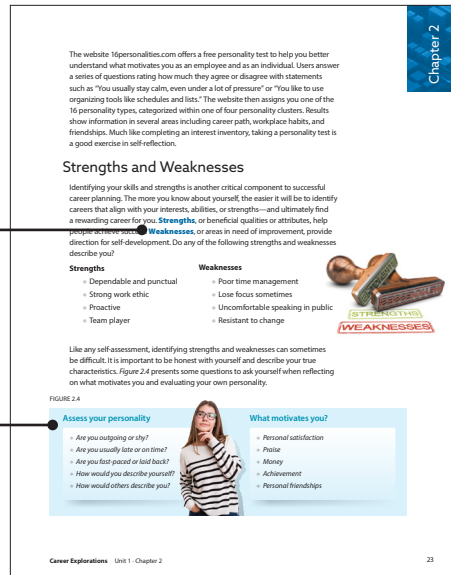
Each career cluster is described to provide an overview of the careers it offers.

## Key Terms

Highlighted key terms provide a deeper understanding of career concepts.

## Figures

Vital information is illustrated for easy understanding and reference.



### Did You Know?

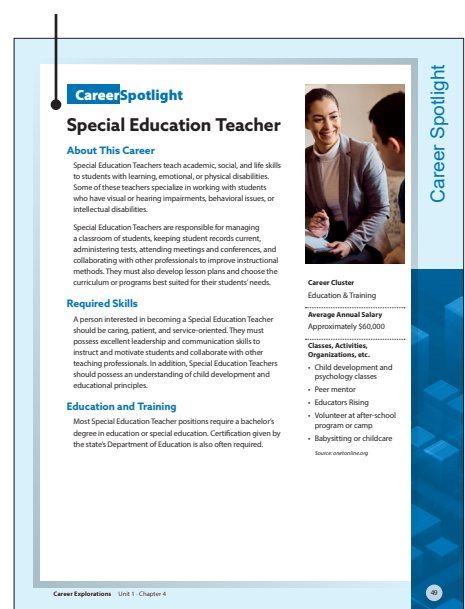
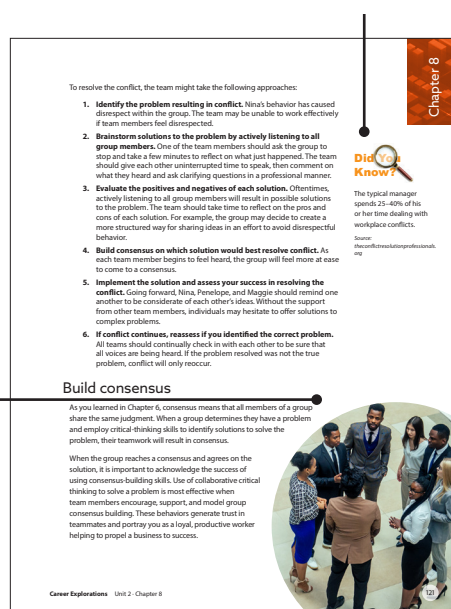
Chapters include a variety of interesting facts and statistics about careers and the workforce.

## Career Spotlight

Careers in each career cluster are highlighted to provide examples of popular career paths.

## Images

Each chapter contains a variety of images of professionals in a range of careers helping to illustrate today's working world.



## Chapter Review

## Pursuing Education &amp; Career Training

In this chapter, you learned about the various education and training options available to prepare yourself for your career, including licensing, certification, postsecondary education, and more. Depending on your chosen field, the level of training required and the options available to give you the best opportunity for advancement may be different. But by considering the return on your investment and utilizing sound strategies for academic success, you will increase your chances of reaching your long-term career goals.

## Instructions

Demonstrate your knowledge of this chapter by completing the following review activities and computer applications projects. All required worksheets will be provided by your instructor.

## Define Key Terms

Apply your knowledge of the chapter reading by defining key vocabulary terms.

## Test Your Knowledge

Test your knowledge of the chapter reading by answering short answer questions.

## Read and Write

Reflect on what you have learned by writing a short essay about how to pursue the education and training required for a career you are interested in.

## Career Spotlight

Explore a career within the Education & Training Career Cluster and write a short essay about what you learn.

## Hands-on Computer Applications Projects

## Project 4.1

Researching College Options

## Project 4.2

Shopping for College Essentials

## Project 4.3

Calculating Return on Investment

Unit 1: Chapter 4 Career Explorations

## Chapter Review

Each chapter concludes with a series of review activities that test students' knowledge of key terms, ability to respond to writing prompts, and application of problem-solving and critical-thinking skills.

In addition, each chapter features hands-on computer applications projects in which students are challenged to put the concepts they learned into action by creating a variety of professional documents as they prepare to showcase their work in the final cumulative career portfolio project.

Chapter Reviews include the following activities:

## Define Key Terms

Students define the key terms presented in each chapter, helping them to prepare for the Chapter Assessment.

## Test Your Knowledge

Students demonstrate their comprehension of chapter topics by completing a series of short answer questions.

## Read and Write

Students apply their understanding of the concepts presented in the chapter by responding to a writing prompt.

## Career Spotlight

Students research and explore a career of their choice within each of the 16 career clusters.

## Hands-on Computer Applications Projects

Students complete a series of career-focused computer applications projects using word processing, spreadsheets, presentations, and more.

**NOTE:** All required worksheets will be provided by your instructor.

## Computer Applications Projects

Computer Applications Project files offer a framework in which students respond to guiding questions to help them begin planning and brainstorming a project's content. Then, students complete step-by-step instructions to create their final document using word processing, spreadsheets, presentations, or other computer applications.

## Career Explorations

Name \_\_\_\_\_

## Project 3.2

## Instructions

In this project, you will provide insight on how to create a proper action plan. Answer the information you will need, then reuse this Creating Your Document to use word processing.

## Part 1: Project Preparation

## 1. Read the following scenario:

Imagine that your friend has approved an interest inventory and decided to pursue a career in graphic design. They have set two career goals and are developing an action plan to sell handmade jewelry within the graphic design after high school.

Hint: Refer to the "Turning a Goal into an Action Plan" worksheet.

2. Define your friend's short-term and long-term goals.

3. For each goal, list 2-3 smaller, more manageable steps that may require researching or planning.

## Part 2: Creating Your Document

Now that you've helped define your friend's short-term and long-term career goals and created an action plan to help them achieve their goals, follow the instructions below to use your word processing software to create a table summarizing your recommendations for how they should achieve their goals.

1. Create a new word processing document and save it as **Project 3.2**.

Note: Use **Figure 3.2** for guidance as you complete the project.

- At the top of the document, key the document title [Career Action Plan for] followed by your friend's name.
- Below the document title, create a 3 column by 6 row table.
- Key the information into the table as shown in **Figure 3.2**.
- Use your answers to Part 1 to complete the second and third columns of the table.
- Resize the table, columns, and rows as necessary so that all information is readable.
- Change the font size, shading, and/or page borders so that the document projects a professional appearance.
- Carefully proofread your work for accuracy and format, then resave. Print or share the file if required by your instructor.
- Print or share your answers to the questions on Part 1 of this document if required by your instructor.

Figure 3.2

	Short-term Goal: Start an online business	Long-term Goal: Earn a degree in graphic design
1. Define the goal		
2. Divide the goal into smaller parts		
3. Identify steps within each sub-goal		
4. Plan for the unexpected		
5. Review progress along the way		

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## Sample Answer Key

## Career Action Plan for Gina

	Short-term Goal: Start an online business	Long-term Goal: Earn a degree in graphic design
1. Define the goal	Define a short-term SMART goal: "Start an online business by January 1, 2020 that sells the handmade jewelry pieces I create."	Define a long-term SMART goal: "Earn a Bachelor of Arts in Studio Arts with a concentration in Graphic Design from a college or university within 50 miles of my home by May of 2024."
2. Divide the goal into smaller parts	Break up each goal into more manageable sub-goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Set up an online e-commerce website</li> <li>Create and choose pieces of handmade jewelry to sell</li> <li>Set pricing for each piece of jewelry</li> </ul>	Break up each goal into more manageable sub-goals: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research nearby colleges that offer a BA in Studio Arts with a Graphic Design concentration</li> <li>Begin to create a portfolio of art and design pieces</li> <li>Take high school elective courses related to graphic design</li> </ul>
3. Identify steps within each sub-goal	Identify the smaller, manageable steps necessary to be successful: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Register a domain name</li> <li>Purchase supplies</li> <li>Create a cost analysis spreadsheet</li> </ul>	Identify the smaller, manageable steps necessary to be successful: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Spend 30 minutes each day reading college websites about their program offerings</li> <li>Work on 2-3 art pieces each week</li> <li>Meet with guidance counselor to discuss elective courses</li> </ul>
4. Plan for the unexpected	Have a "what if" plan in place to address obstacles along the way: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Research additional possible online marketplaces</li> </ul>	Have a "what if" plan in place to address obstacles along the way: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Consider alternative majors that are related to graphic design</li> </ul>
5. Review progress along the way	Review your action plan after each major step to determine if any additions or changes are needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Test website functionality and site traffic regularly</li> </ul>	Review your action plan after each major step to determine if any additions or changes are needed: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review grades each week to be sure GPA stays within an acceptable range to be accepted into college</li> </ul>

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# Unit 1

## Exploring Careers

### **Chapter 1**

Discovering the Working World

### **Chapter 2**

Getting to Know Yourself

### **Chapter 3**

Setting Career Goals

### **Chapter 4**

Pursuing Education & Career Training





## Chapter 1

# Discovering the Working World

Whether eating at a restaurant, shopping online, or commuting to a job, our daily lives revolve around the world of work. Jobs and careers move our economy forward and help individuals generate income. However, the way a person earns a living also has a direct impact on the lifestyle they are able to maintain and can even contribute to achieving personal satisfaction and fulfillment. Understanding the landscape of the working world and your own motivations will help put you on your path towards career success.

### Objectives

After reading this chapter, you will be able to:

- ☑ Explain the roles careers play in an individual's life
- ☑ Understand various types of employment and the landscape of career choices
- ☑ Identify different types of compensation
- ☑ Understand the concept of organized labor

### Key Terms

arbitration  
benefit  
bonus  
career  
career cluster  
collective bargaining  
commission  
compensation  
employee  
entrepreneur  
exempt employee  
gross pay  
incentive  
intrapreneur  
job  
labor contract  
labor relations  
labor union  
mediation  
minimum wage  
non-exempt employee  
overtime pay  
purpose  
salary  
strike  
tip  
wage  
work

# Why Work?

There are many reasons to become part of the workforce in your community. When it relates to employment, **work** refers to the task or duties that are performed to accomplish something, for compensation, experience, or both. Aside from earning money, being employed allows you to use your talents, maintain the lifestyle you want, and help in achieving your life's purpose. Having a job also contributes to creating a strong economy.

Your personality, interests, values, and aptitudes all factor into the job that you do. For instance, a person who enjoys helping others may find personal satisfaction by earning a living as a social worker. That same person may also prefer working in a more creative, artistic job and will find similar benefits teaching a craft class to children.



Your chosen career can also help you earn the money required to achieve a desired lifestyle that fits your priorities. These priorities include where you want to live, the type of house you see yourself in, the things you do for fun, and the size of the family you wish to have. Maybe you imagine yourself living by the beach in a small cottage, surfing on your days off. Or perhaps you dream of living in a big city, enjoying the culture around you with friends. Not all jobs have the same earning potential, so understanding your priorities can help you make career choices to match them. Later in this text, you will learn about budgeting and the importance of understanding what you will need to earn to afford your desired lifestyle.

Besides basic needs such as food and shelter, humans also have a strong desire to live life with a **purpose**, or a significant reason for doing what you do. A purpose can be difficult to identify but doing so will help you choose a career that you find meaningful. Your purpose is often related to your values. Understanding yourself and exploring your life's mission can help you define your purpose. Examples of a person's purpose include helping others, sharing your talents, or solving complex problems.

Finally, employment aids in keeping a community's economy strong. In the simplest terms, when people earn money, they are able to use that money to buy goods and services. A strong economy can allow communities to offer the services that its residents enjoy and need, such as schools, hospitals, and recreation. In areas where unemployment is high, economies suffer, which ultimately affects the people who live there.



# Jobs and Careers

To identify a path of employment, people must decide if they are looking for a job or a career. A **job** is a specific duty, role, or function. A **career** is a profession for which one trains and is undertaken as a permanent calling. A job can be short-term employment for financial gain, while a career involves a long-term position performing tasks in which one has an interest, education, or particular skill set.

Jobs require specific skills, but do not usually require extensive instruction or education beyond on-the-job training. For instance, taking a job as a server in a restaurant would require learning how to wait on customers in a friendly way while managing the urgency of a customer's demands. A career, meanwhile, usually involves completing a certification or degree program in your chosen field. Since careers can be lifelong, you may find yourself working for many organizations throughout your working life in the same field. For instance, an accountant may begin their career working for a large public accounting firm, then move on to work privately for one of that firm's clients. To better understand the distinctions between a job and a career, review *Figure 1.1*.

FIGURE 1.1

Job	Career
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A specific duty, role, or function a person performs</li> <li>✓ Short-term employment for financial gain</li> <li>✓ Does not usually require extensive training or education</li> <li>✓ Can help define careers you may or may not enjoy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ A profession for which one trains</li> <li>✓ Undertaken as a permanent calling</li> <li>✓ Usually involves completing a certification or degree program</li> <li>✓ Begins with the pursuit of individual interests</li> </ul>



## Types of Employment

People generally find themselves in one of three types of employment situations: employee, intrapreneur, or entrepreneur. An **employee** is someone employed by another for wages or salary, and typically in a position below the executive level. Teachers, cashiers, delivery people, and office support staff are all examples of employees. An **entrepreneur** is a person who organizes, operates, and assumes the risk for a business venture. Someone who opens a designer sneaker resale store is an entrepreneur. Entrepreneurs who have chosen to start their own businesses often provide jobs and careers for many employees.

Situated between an employee and entrepreneur is an **intrapreneur**. An intrapreneur is a corporate executive who develops new enterprises within a corporation. For example, an executive at a television network who proposes to launch a new video streaming platform would be considered an intrapreneur.

Throughout your working life, you may find that you fulfill all three types of employment. For example, you may start your career as an employee for someone else, grow into an intrapreneur, and eventually decide to start your own business and become an entrepreneur. Because of this, it is helpful to understand the three different types of employment and the impact they might have on your career journey. Entrepreneurial traits like passion and creativity, for instance, can be valuable in your career regardless of whether the risk of starting your own business appeals to you.



## Career Clusters

As you prepare to enter the working world, it is important to have an understanding of the landscape of existing career options. The National Career Clusters Framework divides job opportunities into 16 different **career clusters**, or groups of occupations within the same field that require similar knowledge or skills. The clusters, shown in *Figure 1.2*, began in 1996 as part of the Building Linkages project created collaboratively between the National Skills Standards Board, National School-to-Work Office, and the Office of Vocational and Adult Education. Each career cluster is divided into pathways, which group occupations using a similar set of skills within the same career cluster.

*Source: web.archive.org*

Researching the career clusters and their various pathways further can reveal jobs you are interested in, including some careers you may never have considered. For example, if you have an interest in technology and are knowledgeable about computers, you may discover a range of appealing careers within the Information Technology career cluster.

FIGURE 1.2

Career Cluster	Description
<b>Agriculture, Food &amp; Natural Resources</b>	Agribusiness, animal products, food products and processing, natural resources, and power and technical systems
<b>Architecture &amp; Construction</b>	Design, pre-construction, construction, maintenance, and operations
<b>Arts, A/V Technology &amp; Communications</b>	A/V technology, film, printing, visual arts, performing arts, journalism, broadcasting, and telecommunications
<b>Business Management &amp; Administration</b>	General management, business information, human resources, operations, and administrative support
<b>Education &amp; Training</b>	Administration, administrative support, professional support, and teacher training
<b>Finance</b>	Securities, investments, business finance, accounting, insurance, and banking services
<b>Government &amp; Public Administration</b>	Government, national security, foreign service, planning, revenue and taxation, regulation, and public management and administration
<b>Health Science</b>	Therapeutic services, diagnostic services, health informatics, support services, and biotechnology research and development
<b>Hospitality &amp; Tourism</b>	Restaurants and food beverage services, lodging, travel and tourism, recreation, and amusements and attractions
<b>Human Services</b>	Early childhood development, counseling, mental health services, family and community services, personal care, and consumer services
<b>Information Technology</b>	Network systems, information support, web and digital communications, programming, and software development
<b>Law, Public Safety, Corrections &amp; Security</b>	Correction services, emergency and fire management services, law enforcement, legal services, and security and protective services
<b>Manufacturing</b>	Production, maintenance and installation, quality assurance, logistics and inventory control, and health, safety, and environmental assurance
<b>Marketing</b>	Marketing management, professional sales, merchandising, marketing communications, and marketing research
<b>Science, Technology, Engineering &amp; Mathematics</b>	Engineering, technology, science, and mathematics
<b>Transportation, Distribution &amp; Logistics</b>	Transportation operations, logistics planning and management, warehousing and distribution center operation, facility and mobile equipment maintenance, transportation systems, and infrastructure planning

Source: [web.archive.org](http://web.archive.org)





### Career Cluster

Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources

### Average Annual Salary

Approximately \$30,000

### Classes, Activities, Organizations, etc.

- Ecology and biology classes
- Hiking Club
- Future Farmers of America (FFA)
- Volunteer with conservation group
- Internship with Department of Environmental Management

Source: [onetonline.org](http://onetonline.org)

## Career Spotlight

# Forest and Conservation Worker

## About This Career

Forest and Conservation Workers perform manual labor necessary to develop, maintain, or protect areas such as forests, woodlands, wetlands, and rangelands. They maintain and operate required equipment, thin and cut trees, and work in teams to address safety issues.

Some of the tasks and responsibilities of Forest and Conservation Workers include raising and transporting seedlings; combatting insects, pests, and diseases harmful to plant life; and building structures to control water, erosion, and leaching of soil. They also gather, package, or deliver forest products to buyers.

## Required Skills

A person interested in becoming a Forest and Conservation Worker should be independent and self-motivated and enjoy working outdoors and using their hands. They must possess strong problem-solving skills to develop appropriate plans to address conservation issues and carry out the required work. They must also be knowledgeable in biology, geography, and issues of public safety and be able to perform physical labor without tiring.

## Education and Training

Many Forest and Conservation positions require an associate's degree or vocational training in forestry. On-the-job training and a recognized apprenticeship program may also be required.

# Types of Compensation

Since one of the most important reasons individuals work is to earn a living, it's important to understand the various ways workers are paid. **Compensation** refers to the monetary and non-monetary benefits that motivate employees to perform tasks. A business may be contributing positively to society, but employees need money to live. Compensation is a critical part of building a strong team and employers know that offering competitive wages is one way to ensure they will attract the right employees to the company.

An employee's pay is determined when employers decide the pay and benefits they will receive based on the available financial resources of the company or organization. While most employees would love to earn the highest salary possible, most businesses do not have the financial resources to pay that salary. Instead, an employee's compensation is calculated to align with the value their work brings to a company. This value is based on their skills and abilities, experience, level of education, and more. Employees who boast a higher level of experience and education, which they can use to excel in the position, are typically offered higher compensation.

Employee compensation includes salary, wages, benefits, and incentives. The type of compensation varies depending on the industry and position, so an understanding of each can help you identify positions that match your education and experience.



Entrepreneurs who did not attend or finish college outnumber those with higher-education degrees across both genders and in every age group among entrepreneurs.

Source:  
cnbc.com

## Wages and Tips

**Wage** refers to the payment of money for labor or services usually according to a contract and on an hourly, daily, or piecework basis. When a wage is considered piecework, it means that the rate is calculated based on the number of goods or services produced. Employees receive wages depending on the nature of their work. For example, a phlebotomist would not likely be paid piecework wages because her employer wouldn't want to encourage her to rush through drawing blood from patients. Since the focus is on safety and customer care, hourly wages are a more appropriate compensation for the phlebotomist.





Wages must be competitive within the industry, meaning they have to be close to what other businesses in the same sector pay. For example, an accountant choosing between a firm offering \$33 per hour and another offering \$30 per hour will likely choose to work at the firm paying the higher wage. Companies that offer good wages ensure they attract skilled workers who will help them remain effective and competitive in their industry.

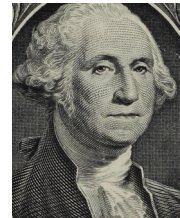
Employees who earn wages will sometimes earn a **tip**, also referred to as gratuity, which is money given on top of the wage. Service industries will oftentimes pay their employees lower wages because they are also earning tips. For example, a restaurant server might earn \$8 per hour, plus tips. Even with tips factored in, it is important for employees in service industries to make a fair wage and for all workers to understand the wages they are legally entitled to.

The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) is a law that contains information about wages and the nature of tipping. The FLSA also provides standards and information about the minimum wage that is acceptable to pay employees. **Minimum wage** is a wage fixed by legal authority or by contract as the least that may be paid either to employed persons generally or to a particular category of employed persons. The FLSA declares a federal minimum wage for the country, currently set at \$7.25 per hour, however many states determine their own minimum wages. See *Figure 1.3* for an example of minimum wages in different states.

FIGURE 1.3

### Statewide Minimum Wage Examples

Alabama	\$7.25/hour
California	\$14/hour
Hawaii	\$10.10/hour
Texas	\$7.25/hour



Source: [paycor.com](https://www.paycor.com)

In addition to tipping and minimum wage standards, the FLSA sets rules for overtime work that businesses must follow. **Overtime pay** is when an employee receives additional pay at one and one-half times the regular rate of pay for work that exceeds the typical 40-hour workweek. See *Figure 1.4* for an example of how an employee working six hours of overtime increases their total compensation beyond their regular wages.

FIGURE 1.4

Regular wages	40 hours x \$12.50 per hour = \$500.00
Overtime rate of pay	\$12.50 per hour x 1.5 = \$18.75 per hour
Overtime wages	6 hours x \$18.75 per hour = \$112.50
Total wages	\$500.00 + \$112.50 = \$612.50

# Salaries

A **salary** is fixed compensation paid regularly for services. Salaries refer to the amount of money earned throughout a year. For example, a marketing manager might earn \$60,000 a year. Instead of being given \$60,000 when she signs her employment contract, she is paid in increments throughout the year. This salary is set as the amount of money an employee will earn before taxes.

Salaries differ from wages in that they do not depend on hours worked or projects completed—they are set by the employment contract. Employees may be issued payments on a monthly, bimonthly, biweekly, or weekly basis depending on the company. See *Figure 1.5* for the number of payments per year depending on the pay frequency.

FIGURE 1.5

Frequency	Number of Payments per Year
Monthly	12
Bimonthly	24
Biweekly	26
Weekly	52

For example, a computer programmer might earn \$52,000 a year but how his earnings before taxes are deducted will vary depending on his pay frequency. If his employer pays him weekly, his **gross pay**, or earnings before taxes and deductions are taken, will be \$1,000 per paycheck. To compute gross pay, divide the annual salary by the number of payments per year. See *Figure 1.6* for a breakdown of gross pay for the computer programmer based on how frequently he gets paid.

FIGURE 1.6

Frequency	Gross Pay
Monthly	$\$52,000/12 = \$4333.33$
Bimonthly	$\$52,000/24 = \$2166.67$
Biweekly	$\$52,000/26 = \$2000$
Weekly	$\$52,000/52 = \$1000$

There are also exempt and non-exempt salaried employees. **Exempt employees** are not eligible for overtime pay, even if they work beyond the full-time hours established in their contract. **Non-exempt employees**, however, receive a salary based on a fixed number of hours (usually 40 hours per week). If an employee exceeds 40 hours, he or she is compensated with overtime pay.



In 1979, the median weekly earnings of full-time wage and salary workers was \$241. As of 2019, that number has increased to \$984.

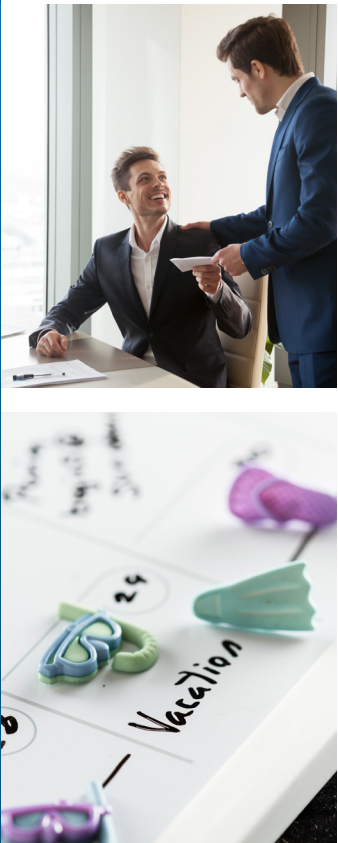
Source:  
statista.com



# Incentives

**Incentives** refer to types of compensation based on employer-recognized success. Businesses offer two types of incentives to their workers based on their performance at work: commission and bonuses. A **commission** represents a fee paid to an agent or employee for completing a piece of business or performing a service. Commissions are common in the sales and advertising industries to motivate workers to make large sales. For example, an employee who makes \$1,000 with 20 percent commission will earn a total of \$1,200. Those who are skilled in making sales will prosper with commission; those who struggle and make fewer sales will make less money.

The other common type of incentive is a **bonus**—money or an equivalent given in addition to an employee’s usual compensation. Businesses give bonuses to employees based on their performance or as a share in the company’s profits. Many businesses will set a goal for an annual profit, and if the company meets or surpasses their goal, it will distribute a certain percentage to employees as a bonus. These types of bonuses help keep employees motivated while working towards an overall business goal.



# Benefits

**Benefits** are non-monetary forms of compensation provided to employees in addition to their salaries or wages. Benefits will often come as a package and typically include medical and dental insurance, retirement plans, paid time off, vacation days, sick leave, and more. *Figure 1.7* lists common examples of employee benefits.

FIGURE 1.7

Examples of Employee Benefits

Life Insurance	Provides money to family members in the case of the employee’s death
Medical Insurance	Full or partial coverage of any medical-related expenses from doctor or hospital visits
Vacation Days	Offer paid days an employee may take off of work
Flex Time	Offers employees the flexibility to set their work schedules or the opportunity to work remotely on occasion
Tuition Reimbursement	Provides money to employees for college or technical tuition or to attend training and professional development events
Relocation Expenses	If an employee must move to work, the employer offers to pay for the expenses of moving

Many employees are attracted to job opportunities that offer plentiful benefits. Google, for instance, is often described as one of the best places to work in America because of their benefits and on-the-job perks. Opportunities to take advantage of flex time, maternity and paternity leaves, onsite gyms and childcare, and free meals are just a few of the non-monetary benefits that make employers such as Google a desirable place to work.

## Organized Labor

While salaries and benefits represent incentives for people to work, employees must also be aware of ways to protect their rights while working. For example, you would want to be sure that your duties and responsibilities would not be changed without proper training and pay. A **labor union** is a group of workers who join to advocate for worker rights by collective bargaining. Labor unions are also known as organized labor. The concept of organized labor is that when workers unite with the intention of protecting themselves from mistreatment by businesses, they can influence business policies such as fair wages and compensation.

Labor unions first originated in the United States in the 1900s, when working conditions were still hazardous and poor. Unions negotiate for higher wages, improved worker safety, and reasonable working hours. For example, in 2007, employees in the United Auto Workers Union protested General Motors (GM) about worker benefits. They went on strike for several days until GM struck a bargain with the union.

## Labor Disputes

When disagreements and tensions occur, organized labor unions attempt to influence both the government and businesses. Unions attempt to convince the government to pass more laws requiring employers to provide them with better treatment for workers or benefits such as paid leave or increased minimum wages. When unions are unable to influence businesses to provide the conditions their workers demand, a labor dispute arises.

There are three stages of an organized labor dispute: collective bargaining, mediation, and arbitration. At the first sign of unfair treatment within a group of workers, a union will engage in **collective bargaining**, formal negotiation with business managers in the industry. Both sides will attempt to come up with an agreement, but if a compromise cannot be reached, the situation may escalate.

As tensions rise, both businesses and unions will send an impartial person to objectively hear their opponent's ideas for a solution, a process called **mediation**. If no agreement can be made, a third stage called arbitration begins. During **arbitration**, both unions and businesses will select third party individuals who have no stake in the matter to review the facts, hear both sides, and make a legally binding decision as a means of a solution.



In 2021, the union membership rate of public sector workers (33.9%) was more than five times higher than that of private sector workers (6.1%).

Source:  
bls.gov





Union members may organize a strike at any time during a labor dispute. A **strike** puts pressure on a business because it deprives businesses of the labor resources they need to make a profit. Strikes are meant to prove that workers are serious about their demands, and when the union approves a strike, workers are often protected from being fired during the strike.

When a labor union and a business reach an agreement through negotiation or an arbitrator, both sides sign a labor contract. A **labor contract** describes the terms of the agreement of the dispute. The process of negotiation, from the onset of the dispute to the signing of a labor contract, is known as **labor relations**.



Because working conditions have improved and many laws have been passed concerning worker rights and safety, membership in labor unions has declined. However, organized labor unions remain working today to protect the rights of workers in their respective industries. The US National Labor Relations Board works to protect employee rights to join, form, and be represented by a union. They also serve as bargaining representatives on behalf of unions. Labor unions fight to ensure the fair treatment of workers, and their efforts have produced effects that workers across a variety of industries still enjoy today. As you begin your career, it's important to be aware of the concept of organized labor and the rights you are entitled to as an employee.



## CareerConnections

### Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources

Careers in Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources include production, processing, marketing, distribution, financing, and development of agricultural commodities and resources such as food, fiber, wood products, natural resources, horticulture, and other plant and animal products.

Many individuals in this field work with animals—either on farms or in other environments—or operate equipment used to develop natural resources. Employees should have an interest and concern for natural resources and demonstrate professional ethics and legal responsibilities to succeed in the field.

Source: [careertech.org](http://careertech.org)



# Chapter Review

## Discovering the Working World

In this chapter, you learned about the world of work, including the reasons to pursue a career, the different types of working roles, the ways employees are paid, and the role organized labor plays in society. When choosing which job or career to pursue, it is important to reflect on your own talents, skills, likes, dislikes, and dreams, as well as your life's purpose. Compensation and other incentives are important components to any career, but understanding your purpose will help you find motivating and fulfilling work.

### Instructions

Demonstrate your knowledge of this chapter by completing the following review activities and computer applications projects. All required worksheets will be provided by your instructor.

### Define Key Terms

Apply your knowledge of the chapter reading by defining key vocabulary terms.

### Test Your Knowledge

Test your knowledge of the chapter reading by answering short answer questions.

### Read and Write

Reflect on what you have learned by writing a short essay about discovering your desired lifestyle.

### Career Spotlight

Explore a career within the Agriculture, Food & Natural Resources Career Cluster and write a short essay about what you learn.

### Hands-on Computer Applications Projects

#### Project 1.1

Comparing Types of Compensation

#### Project 1.2

Calculating Gross Pay

#### Project 1.3

Becoming an Entrepreneur