



Lesson 11: Career / Work

This lesson invites students to examine what they are looking for in their careers. It also helps focus their attention on real-world skills that could be useful for them when applying for a job.

Level: Pre-intermediate and above (equivalent to CEF level B1 and above)

Time: 60-90 mins

How to use this lesson:

This lesson is designed to be done in class as there is a lot of vocabulary which students might need help with. However, with very advanced and highly motivated students, you could ask them to prepare some sections for homework.

Worksheet A

You will need to tailor this lesson to the personal circumstances of your students. If they are not working, then most of the points for discussion can be hypothetical, based on what they expect when they start full-time employment. For students who do have work experience, encourage them to share their thoughts with the class.

- The first exercise introduces some of the key vocabulary that students will use in this lesson. It is worth taking a little time to explain the words and how they apply to work and careers. However, it is a good idea to find out first what students already know, so tell them to spend a minute or two working alone to put the words in the correct categories. Stress that you do not expect them to finish the task yet, but that they should do the words that they feel fairly confident about. After a minute or so, allow students to compare notes in pairs for a short time. Complete the task as a class, giving a brief definition or translation for each word as you go. Ask students to give you examples by prompting with questions such as:

- ▶ What do we mean by a casual working environment?
- ▶ What would make a job challenging?
- ▶ Can you give me some examples of office jobs?
- ▶ What does it mean to be committed to your job?

Point out that this exercise includes only adjectives, but that there are many derivatives that students would benefit from knowing, for example, *challenge* (v+n), *commitment*, (in)competence, complication(s), etc.

Finally, you might like to ask if students know any other words that could go in each category. Those without work experience might need help with more specialised terms.

Suggested answers

Job/Work	Working environment	People
challenging	flexible	committed
clerical	industrial	competent
complicated	organised	creative
industrial	relaxed	flexible
manual	stressful	honest
stressful	varied	influential
varied		organised
well-paid casual		respectful
		well-paid



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- Here, students discuss noun-based vocabulary related to the topic of work. Go through the items one by one, eliciting suggestions from the class. Expressing the exact difference is difficult, so be patient with students and give help where needed. Point out that, in some cases, the difference is only a question of perspective.

Suggested answers

Students' answers should be similar to (but not necessarily exactly the same as) those given below.

- A *professional* is a person who does something for money, while a *freelancer* works for different companies and is not employed by only one.
 - A *salary* is the amount of money you earn per month or per year, while *commission* is usually paid as a percentage of the sales that you have generated.
 - Teamwork* and *collaboration* can be exactly the same thing, but *collaboration* could involve working with only one other person, while *teamwork* involves more than one.
 - A person's *contribution* to a project refers to the effort they have made, while their *achievement* suggests that a project has been finished successfully. In other words, *achievement* is more about results.
 - Recognition* for your work usually comes in the form of praise, while *reward* for your work could be more material, such as in money terms.
 - A *challenge* and a *problem* could be exactly the same thing but a *challenge* is what an optimist might call it. A *challenge*, therefore, is when we see a *problem* as something we need to solve. A *problem*, on the other hand, might not be solved.
 - Authority* is the power that you have over someone. Meanwhile, *independence* means you do not have to answer to anyone.
 - If you have *responsibility*, you might have to be particularly careful about safety, or large sums of money, for instance. A *promotion* simply means you are given a better job (with or without extra responsibilities).
- Use this ranking exercise as an opportunity to practise the vocabulary that has arisen in the lesson so far. Make sure students understand what is meant by each item. Allow them a minute or two to put the items in order. When they have finished, elicit any of their own items that students have added and ask them to explain why they are important to them. Then ask individual students to tell the class their top three. As items are repeated, write those most frequently mentioned on the board. When everyone has given their top three, go through the items on the board, prompting with questions like:

- ▶ *Why do you think ... is important?*
- ▶ *Do you think ... is more important than ...? Why?*
- ▶ *What do you understand by ...?*

During the discussion, remind students to try to use the vocabulary from exercises 1 and 2 on this worksheet. Finally, you could ask students what items they have put at the bottom of their list and conduct a discussion about why they think these things are less important.



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Worksheet B

4. Allow up to five minutes for students to read the skills/qualities and think of jobs where they might be most useful. Explain any unknown phrases as students go through them. When they have finished, ask for several opinions from the class. Do not spend too much time on this – just enough to check that students can express their ideas correctly.

Put students in pairs and ask them to discuss their ideas. Draw attention to the sample dialogue on the worksheet and point out that this is just one way of approaching the discussion. They might prefer to mention jobs that they have some experience of, or to focus on *why* the skills/qualities are useful.

Invite several pairs to re-enact their discussion in front of the class.

5. For the role-play activity, you should point out that each student will have the chance to play both the interviewer and the candidate. What they need to prepare beforehand, however, is the role of the interviewer (Student A).

Allow up to five minutes for each student to choose a job and to write questions in the style of those given. They can then take turns, in pairs, to interview one another. Remind students playing the role of the interviewer that they should make it clear at the start *what* the job is (e.g. *So, you're applying for the position of office manager. Can you tell me...*). The student playing the role of the job candidate (Student B) must then answer the questions as best they can.

After each student has practised being both *interviewer* and *candidate*, it would be good for them to swap partners and repeat the role-play. This can be done several times, depending on the amount of time available in the lesson, as it will help the *interviewers* to think of different questions, as well as giving the *candidates* another chance to answer more appropriately.

Finally, elicit feedback on the candidates' experience of being interviewed. Did they find the questions logical and easy to answer? Were they prepared for the questions? Did their answers improve after they swapped partners? Do they think they would get the job based on this interview performance? What could they do to improve their interview performance?

Again, depending on time available, you might want to ask several pairs to act out their interviews in front of the class.

6. For the last task, encourage students to think about their own work situation or career aspirations. Conduct a general discussion on the theme of suitability for certain jobs. Elicit as many opinions as possible, and ask students whether they would approach a job interview any differently as a result of their practice in this lesson.

Allow up to five minutes for students to complete the table. Invite comments from the class (but do not insist on an answer if students are reluctant to give one), and aim to get students talking about what makes a good job candidate.

Round off the lesson by asking students to tell you about their choice of career. If some students are undecided, get them to tell you the general area that they think they are best suited to and why. Encourage them to use vocabulary from the lesson.



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Worksheet A

1. Put the words in the correct categories. Some words may go in more than one category.

casual	committed	flexible	manual	stressful
challenging	competent	honest	organised	varied
clerical	complicated	industrial	relaxed	well-paid
	creative	influential	respectful	

People	Working environment	Job / Work

2. Can you explain the difference between the following?

1. a *professional* and a *freelancer*

2. a *salary* and *commission*

3. *teamwork* and *collaboration*

4. *contribution* and *achievement*

5. *recognition* for your work and *reward* for your work

6. a *challenge* and a *problem*

7. *authority* and *independence*

8. *responsibility* and *promotion*



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3. Number the following in order of how important you think they are, with number 1 as the most important. You can add others if they are important to you.

In my job, it is important for me to have:

- ☐ a high salary
- ☐ a pleasant working environment
- ☐ regular challenges
- ☐ responsibility
- ☐ recognition for my achievements
- ☐ the chance to travel
- ☐ job satisfaction
- ☐ promotion opportunities
- ☐ independence
- ☐ power and authority

☐
☐
☐
☐



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Worksheet B

4. Match the skills/qualities to the jobs where you think they would be most needed. You can use the jobs suggested or your own ideas. Finally, with a partner, discuss your answers.

1. being able to negotiate
2. being able to give good advice
3. being organised and able to coordinate projects
4. being able to show empathy/sensitivity/patience with other people
5. being a good listener
6. being able to handle complaints
7. being able to find imaginative solutions to problems
8. being self-reliant/able to work alone
9. being able to work well in a team
10. being able to motivate others

e.g.

Student A: I think to be a police officer you need to be able to handle complaints, and sometimes to negotiate. You also need to be a good listener and I think it helps if you are able to show empathy or sensitivity to others.

Student B: I think that's right, but you also need most of those abilities to be a shop assistant, although...

Airline pilot
Office manager
Decorator
Designer
Electrician
Engineer
Inventor
Mechanic
Plumber
Police officer
Shop assistant
Teacher

5. In pairs, role-play a job interview situation. Begin by deciding what the job is and writing two or three questions based on the skills/qualities in exercise 4. Then take turns interviewing each other. Remember to use the language from this lesson.

Possible interview questions for Student A to ask:

Why do you want to be a ...?

What special skills or abilities do you think you can offer this profession?

Can you give me an example of when you had to negotiate something/give advice/organise something/find an imaginative solution to something, etc?

What do you think makes a good listener? Do you think you are one? Why/Why not?

Do you work best alone or in a team?

How would you handle the following situation/complaint: [give a scenario related to the job]?



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6. Which of the skills/qualities from this lesson do you think you already have? Which of them would improve your chances of getting a good job? Complete the table.

Skills / abilities I think I have...

Skills / abilities I think I should develop...

Student's Copy