

Guide for New Workers

You need more than
a job to be ready for work



www.readyforwork.sk.ca



Saskatchewan
Labour



Identifying information

Name

Address and postal code

Telephone number(s)

E-mail

Fax

INFORMATION FOR EMERGENCIES

Allergies

Medications

Blood type

Physician's name and phone number

EMERGENCY CONTACTS

Name

Relationship to me

Phone number(s)



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Ready for work

Saskatchewan Labour developed the Guide for New Workers which is a part of the *Ready for Work* series of education and training resources. *Ready for Work* focuses on helping new or young workers make a successful transition to work. The resources promote the development of safe, fair, cooperative, representative and productive workplaces.

New workers and employers know that it takes more than a job to be ready for work. This guide brings together valuable workplace information covering a broad range of topics. The topics are organized by the four phases of the job cycle:

- entering or re-entering the job market
- starting a job
- during a job
- leaving a job

This edition of the Guide has updates on minimum wage, minimum callout, maternity, adoption and parental leave, and the procedure for submitting a complaint to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission.

You can view more detailed information on the topics listed in this guide at the *Ready for Work* website: www.readyforwork.sk.ca



Who's covered?

In Canada, some jobs are governed by provincial rules, while other jobs fall under federal rules. About 90 percent of jobs in Saskatchewan fall under provincial rules or “provincial jurisdiction.” Most provincial laws and regulations for work are found in *The Labour Standards Act*, *The Occupational Health and Safety Act*, and *The Trade Union Act*.

The other 10 percent of jobs in Saskatchewan are under federal government jurisdiction. Most federal laws and regulations for work are found in *The Canada Labour Code*. Jobs under federal jurisdiction include those in telecommunications, banking and transportation as examples.

Although the Guide for New Workers is primarily written for jobs under provincial jurisdiction, this guide will be helpful for all new workers. Whether the job you seek is under federal or provincial jurisdiction, your employer will expect you to have good work habits (for example, be on time, do the best job you can, work safely, etc.). Similarly, how you approach finding a job (for example, preparing a resume, networking, job research) is not determined by federal or provincial laws about work.

Although *The Labour Standards Act* covers many occupations in Saskatchewan, there are some

notable exceptions and variations in coverage that the new worker should know.

Farming

The Labour Standards Act does not apply to an employee primarily employed in farming, ranching, or market gardening. However, the operation of egg hatcheries, green houses and nurseries, bush clearing and commercial hog barn operations do not fall within the meaning of farming, ranching or market gardening.

Home workers

If you work out of your own home for someone else, you're a home worker. You might do work such as sewing, taking orders for goods or services over the phone, or office work via computer links. As a home worker, you're entitled to all the rights and benefits of *The Labour Standards Act*. That includes leaves, notice of work schedules, meal breaks, notice of termination and so on.

Sitters

You are a sitter if you come in on an occasional, short term basis to allow parents to go shopping, to the movies, etc. As a sitter, you are not covered by *The Labour Standards Act*.

Domestic workers

If you're hired to perform work in the private residence of the employer related to the management

and operation of the household (that is, cleaning, washing and gardening), you're a domestic worker.

Come-in domestic workers are entirely covered by *The Labour Standards Act*. Some special rules apply to live-in domestic workers. For more information, contact the Labour Standards Office closest to you.

Care providers

You're a care provider if you're hired for the care and supervision of an immediate family member in either the home of the employer or the home of the family member requiring care.

Come-in care providers are exempt from minimum wage, overtime and the requirement to provide notice of termination or pay in lieu of notice. All other Labour Standards provisions apply. There are some special provisions for live-in care providers. For more information, contact the Labour Standards Office closest to you.

Overtime exemptions

Overtime provisions do not apply to: people working north of the 62nd township, except within a 10 km radius of La Ronge, Creighton, and Uranium City; domestic workers and care providers; managerial or professional employees; other designated employees. Contact the Labour Standards Office closest to you for more information.



Saskatchewan Labour Contact Information

Occupational Health & Safety

<i>Regina</i>	<i>Saskatoon</i>
<i>(306)787-4496</i>	<i>(306)933-5052</i>
<i>1-800-567-7233</i>	<i>1-800-667-5023</i>

Labour Standards

<i>Estevan</i>	<i>Regina</i>
<i>(306) 637-4572</i>	<i>(306) 787-2438</i>
<i>Moose Jaw</i>	<i>Saskatoon</i>
<i>(306) 694-3737</i>	<i>(306) 933-5042</i>
<i>North Battleford</i>	<i>Swift Current</i>
<i>(306) 446-7491</i>	<i>(306) 778-8497</i>
<i>Prince Albert</i>	<i>Yorkton</i>
<i>(306) 953-2715</i>	<i>(306) 786-1390</i>
<i>Regina (toll free)</i>	
<i>1-800-667-1783</i>	

Education and Training Services

<i>(toll free)</i>	<i>Saskatoon</i>
<i>1-877-419-3510</i>	<i>(306) 933-5051</i>

Mailing address:

*Education and Training Services Unit
Saskatchewan Labour
8th Floor, 122 3rd Avenue North
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan S7K 2H6*



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The Big Picture



Introduction

The job cycle

This guide is designed for new or young workers. It can also help employers and supervisors. The guide answers a lot of everyday work-related questions. Good communication is very important for a good working relationship between workers and supervisors/employers.

New workers have many questions about the job and the workplace. New workers are also more likely to be injured than more experienced workers. For this reason, health and safety is emphasized throughout the guide.

The symbol on the front cover represents the worker and the employer working together. Good communications contribute to productive and rewarding experiences for both workers and employers.

The diagram opposite expands on the graphic from the front page. The world of work is very dynamic. There is no standing still. New workers are continually entering or re-entering the workforce. There is a continual process of starting and leaving jobs.

The diagram shows that more productive and rewarding workplaces are those that respect:

- safety and health
- fairness and equity
- co-operation and teamwork
- inclusiveness and diversity





*Facts about young workers**

There were 139,000 persons between 15 and 24 years of age living in Saskatchewan in 2004.

- 19% were aboriginal.
- 61% were in the labour force.
- Of the 85,200 young persons employed, 60% worked full-time and 40% worked part-time.
- This age group had 6,999 injury claims accepted by the Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board (WCB).
- While this age group represented 16% of the workforce, it accounted for 19% of the injury claims accepted by the WCB.

The three industries with the highest number of injury claims for the 15-24 age group were:

- hotels, motels, restaurants, catering and protective services
- building construction
- department stores and food outlets

One in seven young workers belonged to a union.

* Based on 2004 statistics.



The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms

The Charter ensures the fair treatment of all people in Canada. It is relevant in each phase of the job cycle.

Your rights include:

- the right to vote or be a candidate in federal and provincial elections
- the right to enter, remain in, or leave Canada
- the right to earn a living and reside in any province or territory
- the right to communicate in English or French with the federal government and certain provincial governments
- the right of French and English minorities in every province and territory to be educated in their own language
- the right to apply for a Canadian passport

Your responsibilities as a good citizen include:

- appreciating and helping to preserve Canada's multicultural heritage
- allowing other Canadians to enjoy their rights and freedoms

- eliminating discrimination and injustice
- understanding and obeying Canada's laws
- voting in federal, provincial and municipal elections
- respecting public and private property
- supporting Canada's ideals, building the country we all share



Entrepreneurship

New and young workers today have many opportunities to develop their entrepreneurial skills and business interests.

The business community is open to the ideas of young people as never before. Every day you hear or read about the development of a new product or service that has the imagination, initiative and energy of young workers behind it.

No two entrepreneurs are alike. Some of the general skills you need to be a successful entrepreneur are the ability to:

- recognize opportunities
- carry out research to figure out if you have identified a viable opportunity
- develop an innovative idea
- communicate your vision to investors or potential partners
- make financial plans and figure out costs and budgets
- set goals and priorities, and follow through on your plans

As an entrepreneur, you may work independently or for a company. Entrepreneurs can make significant contributions to the productivity and profitability of their own businesses or corporations.

Programs that support young persons' interest in business entrepreneurship include:

- Aboriginal Business Canada, Industry Canada
- Western Youth Entrepreneur Program, Western Economic Diversification Canada
- Young Entrepreneur Financing Program, Business Development Bank of Canada
- The International Trade Personnel Program, Western Economic Diversification Canada
- Mentor Program, The Regina Chamber of Commerce (other chambers of commerce may offer similar programs elsewhere in the province).

Telephone numbers for the programs listed above appear in the Agencies to Contact section later in this guide.



Using this guide

The guide is about real situations you'll encounter while in the job cycle.

The guide is organized into topics within each phase of the job cycle. Questions and answers appear under each topic in the guide.

The topic list (an index) gives you the page numbers to go to for the questions and answers on each topic.

The agency contact section provides phone numbers for key workplace agencies.

The personal sections in the guide provide places for you to record your own information or contacts.

The guide provides brief and general information. For more information, see the Ready for Work website: www.readyforwork.sk.ca.



The Job Cycle





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The Job Cycle

Age

What age can I start working?

In Saskatchewan there is no minimum age to work.

However, you have to be at least 16 years old to work in hotels, restaurants, educational institutions, hospitals and nursing homes.

You have to be 16 years old or older to work in the following hazardous workplaces:

- on a construction site
- in a production process at a pulp mill, sawmill or woodworking establishment
- in a production process at a smelter, foundry, refinery or metal processing or fabricating operation
- in a confined space
- in a production process in a meat, fish or poultry processing plant
- in a forestry or logging operation
- on a drilling or servicing rig

- as an operator of powered mobile equipment, a crane or a hoist
- where exposure to a chemical or biological substance is likely to endanger your health or safety
- in power line construction or maintenance

If you're less than 18 years of age, you can't work:

- underground or in an open pit at a mine
- as a radiation worker
- in an asbestos process or silica process
- where you need to use an atmosphere-supplying respirator

Can I work during school hours?

The Education Act may require you to get the written permission of your school principal if you are under the age of 16 and want to work during school hours. You should inform your parents about your decision to work but there is no legal requirement to do so.

Job market

What is the job market?

The need for workers in different jobs makes up the job or labour market. You will have a better chance of finding a job if you know the characteristics of the labour market in your area.

Are there occupations in which it's easier to find work?

Let's say you're interested in working in an office as a data entry clerk. If the number of job openings as a data entry clerk exceeds the number of people available to work as data entry clerks, then we say that 'data entry clerk' is a demand occupation. Data entry skills are hard-to-find skills. If the number of people available to accept work as data entry clerks exceeds the number of job openings, then we say that 'data entry clerk' is a surplus occupation.

Knowing what the demand or surplus occupations are in your area will help when you're looking for work.

How can I find out about those occupations?

To keep track of the occupations that you're interested in, review the newspaper want ads. You will see trends in employment openings.

Checking some of the employment sites on the Internet will give you information for your area of the country and other areas. The SaskNetWork website at www.sasknetwork.gov.sk.ca is an excellent first stop for career, employment and labour market information in Saskatchewan.

Reading the paper to see where industries or businesses are developing will also give you a picture of what the demand occupations are in your area.

Employers need...

What should a worker be like?

All new workers need to know what employers' expectations are for a new worker's skill level, attitude and what s/he needs to know. Though employers will expect slightly different things, the Conference Board of Canada identifies the basic skills needed for employability and self-employment as follows:

- academic: communicating, managing information, using numbers, thinking and problem solving
- personal management: showing positive attitudes and behaviours, being responsible, working safely, being adaptable and learning continuously

- teamwork: working with others and participating in projects and tasks

An article, called “Science Literacy for the World of Work,” lists the competencies specific to science, technology and mathematics. It identifies employee knowledge, skills and abilities needed for an innovative, productive and competitive workforce:

- attitudes and behaviours
- critical-thinking skills
- communication skills
- science, technology and work
- numeracy
- problem solving
- participating in projects and tasks independently or as part of a team
- information technology

This list includes the area of health, safety and the environment. Important in this area is the idea of recognizing substances, circumstances and actions that may be hazardous to people and the environment, and acting appropriately to deal with them.

Checking with your employer to see if you have what s/he needs often takes place in the interview.

Your employer will expect you to have specific employability skills to start and s/he will expect you to learn tasks specific to the job you'll be doing. Your employer should provide adequate orientation and training.

How do I let an employer know I have what s/he wants?

First step, know the employability skills listed by the Conference Board of Canada. Look at yourself.

Think about your skills. How well do they match the Conference Board of Canada list?

You can communicate your skills and achievements in these ways:

- personal resume
- portfolio
- interview

A personal resume is the most common way to communicate your skills, abilities and accomplishments. It contains a summary of what you've done, your training and any work experience.

Although your schooling (academic training) will be important for some jobs, getting other jobs will depend on the 'work' you can show you've done.

Work in this sense refers to short practical courses you've taken that would help you on the job, for example, things like CPR, First Aid, and any occupational health and safety training you received in school. Have you participated in a work experience organized by your school?

All of the things that you've done – supported by any certificates received at the end of your training – form the basis of a 'portfolio'. Developing your portfolio to show to employers not only communicates the things you've done and your skills, it shows you're organized.

Though an interview may be one of the best opportunities to communicate what you can do, it may be much easier to do so when you have something concrete, like a portfolio, to show.

 **Employees need...**

What's a Social Insurance Number (SIN)?

Your SIN is your personal identification number for purposes of employment and income tax in Canada. You need a SIN to work.

Get yours before you start working.

How do I apply for a SIN card?

You can get an application form at a Service Canada office or download one from the Service Canada website. You can submit your application in person to a Service Canada office or submit it by mail.

A document that proves your identity and status in Canada must accompany your application. For further information, contact Service Canada by telephone:

1-800-206-7218 (toll free).

How much does it cost to get one?

Your SIN card is free of charge the first time you apply. You may have to pay a \$10 fee, though, to replace it.

Exploring careers

What's career exploration?

When you do career exploration, you're really taking a hard look at yourself and at the labour market, and trying to decide where you fit best.

Step 1: Know yourself. Ask these questions and find answers:

- What are the skills I have at this point in my life?

- What am I good at?
- What kind of work tasks do I like doing (or think that I might like)?

Step 2: Take a closer look at the labour market, know which occupations are in demand and get a general idea of which jobs match your skills and interests.

Step 3: Make a decision to pursue one or more occupations that fit your skills, interests, and the labour market situation. Plan the steps it will take to reach your goal of employment in a certain occupation.

That might mean you have to work in another job to make the money you need to go back to school to be trained for the job you really want.

What's career planning?

Career planning involves looking at the labour market five, 10 or 15 years from now to find out where the demand for workers will be. With this knowledge and an idea of the kind of work that interests you, you can plan your job search and training to match work areas where workers will be needed in the future.

Twenty years ago, career planning would have identified information technology and computer programming as areas that would need a lot of

workers in the future. At present, it seems that there will be a strong future need for more medical workers. These are examples of how a knowledge of future needs can guide a person's career planning.

Employment agencies and guidance counselors can help you find this kind of information about job futures.

What's life long learning?

The knowledge and technology of the modern workplace is changing rapidly. You will need to upgrade your knowledge and skills regularly. Jobs evolve to include new and different skills. You will need to continue to learn what's necessary to do your job.

Life long learning means improving your current job skills and developing new skills that may lead you into other jobs. Life long learning is an important aspect of your career planning.

Starting my own business

Have you ever wondered if you have what it takes to start your own business? Successful small business owners often have these qualities:

- drive
- thinking ability

- competence in human relations
- communication skills
- technical knowledge

Even if you think you don't have all these qualities, it is possible to develop them while you plan and build your business.

You can get useful information about business development from Saskatchewan Economic Co-operative Development and from The Canada-Saskatchewan Business Service Centre. Libraries, bookstores and computer software stores also carry information on how to develop a business.

Apprenticeship

What is apprenticeship training?

Apprenticeship training leads to certification in a trade.

Apprenticeship training is a great way to learn job skills while earning a wage. It combines hands-on learning where experts in a trade (called journeypersons) pass on their knowledge and expertise to employees (called apprentices) right on the job. This practical training is combined with periods of technical training, usually at a technical institute.

Apprenticeship training takes two to five years to complete. As you progress in the program, your salary increases. When your training is complete and you pass a journeyman examination, you will already have a good paying job and a bright future.

Apprenticeship opens doors to other opportunities too. The skills you learn in your apprenticeship are portable. You can move anywhere in the province and, if you obtain certification through the Red Seal Program, you can work in your trade anywhere in Canada. Some journeymen start their own businesses. Some work in the trade or become teachers, trade instructors, or sales representatives. Apprenticeship leads to quality jobs – now and in the future.

In Saskatchewan, apprenticeship training takes place in 46 designated trades throughout the agriculture, construction, mining/manufacturing/maintenance, motive power/mechanical repair, and tourism/hospitality/service sectors.

How do I register to become an apprentice?

There is a fee to register. The Apprenticeship and Trade Certification Commission is located at 2140 Hamilton Street in Regina at (306)787-2444.

How do I start?

1. Stay in school. Most employers prefer to hire high school graduates with courses in mathematics, science and communications.
2. Contact the Apprenticeship and Trade Certification office in your area for more information about specific trades, entrance requirements, and tips on how to find an apprentice opportunity.
3. Find an employer or union willing to train you as an apprentice. The Apprenticeship and Trade Certification office will help you and your employer sign the apprenticeship contract.

Now you are ready to start!

Applying for a job

What does an employer need to know about me?

Most employers would be pleased to know that you possess the employability skills endorsed by the Conference Board of Canada.

Expressed more simply, employers will want to know whether you're:

- capable of doing or learning the job,
- able to get along with others, and

- have the right attitude toward work.

Employers often say: “Just give me someone with basic skills and a good work attitude and I’ll train him/her.” Just what is a good work attitude?

It can refer to all of the following traits and others:

- reliability
- honesty
- responsibility
- punctuality
- good customer service
- initiative
- getting along with others
- thoroughness
- safety conscious

These attitudes reflect the personal qualities that people learn at home, in school, or in other situations. Employers highly value employees who have a strong, positive attitude about work. In most work situations it isn’t enough just to be able to do a specific job in isolation. Being honest, being interested in providing the best service possible, showing that you can be counted on and that you get along well with others are all important.

What's the best way to look for jobs?

There's probably no one best way to look for a job. The more you do, the more likely you are to get the results you want. Making your interest in working known to everyone you know is a good start. By telling (and retelling) everyone you know that you're looking for work, you increase the network of people who can connect you with an employer or who can tell you about a job opening. Making your own business card and showing your interest in working, will go a long way to letting people know you're serious about your job search.

Places most people look for jobs are:

- newspapers
- employment websites on the Internet
- employment centres
- employment publications
- union centres
- community bulletin boards
- store windows

How should I apply for jobs?

You can apply for jobs in different ways:

- applying for an advertised job according to the employer's instructions (usually by mailing, faxing, or taking in your resume and a covering letter)
- walking-in off the street with your resume
- contacting the employer directly by telephone to make an appointment for an interview, and
- going to a job finding club

What's involved in a resume?

A resume briefly summarizes the parts of your experience that are relevant to work.

Resumes usually include the following sections:

- name, address, telephone number (e-mail or fax if you have one)
- employment objective (the kind of work or job you are looking for)
- skills and personal qualities
- education and any other training (short courses, certificates)

- work experience (summer jobs, part-time work)
- volunteer experience (any community or school activity where you helped out)
- achievements or awards

You can attach the names, addresses and telephone numbers of references to the back of the resume. Alternately, you can present them to the employer at an interview if the interviewer asks for them.

Do I need references?

References are other people who can speak positively about you to an employer you would like to hire you. You usually need three references.

People can act as references in different ways. They may:

- write a letter of reference and give it to you or the employer you want to work for
- fill in a form (provided by the employer) describing your qualities and their experience with you
- agree to speak on your behalf to an employer who contacts them by phone

Who would make a good reference?

Good references are people who can speak positively about you as a person (your character) and/or your ability to work. If you haven't worked for pay, you might ask someone to be a reference who has observed you working as a volunteer. Teachers also make good references.

If you have worked, then it makes sense to ask your past employer(s) to give you a reference as long as you weren't fired from the job. If you haven't worked or haven't been a volunteer, ask your teacher, doctor or clergyman.

Avoid asking your friends or close family members for a reference. Because of their positive bias toward you, their view of you is too subjective.

Do I need permission to use someone as a reference?

Definitely. You must ask someone for their permission before you use them as a reference.

How should I fill in an application form?

Many companies require that you fill in their application forms even if you have a resume.

Application forms are usually picked up at the company's personnel or human resources office.

You can simply go to the office and say, “I would like to apply for work at _____ (name of company). May I please have an application form.” Then thank the person.

Important things to remember when filling in an application form:

- Follow the directions carefully: most application forms tell you what is wanted, e.g., write in ink, print.
- Completeness: answer all the questions that apply to you. Don't leave any sections blank unless you can't get the information. Try to obtain any information you don't have but can get.
- Accuracy: be exact about the details, such as dates, wages, etc.
- Neatness: make your application neat and clear.
- Rough copy: make a rough copy first, then the good copy. If you make a mess of the good copy, do it over.

You can attach your resume to an application form, but some employers won't use it. That's why you should fill-in the application form completely.

Always get someone to look over the rough copy of your application form and make suggestions for

improvement. Learning to fill in applications, like doing good covering letters, is a process of continuous improvement.

What should I say in a covering letter?

A covering letter is your chance to convince the employer that you're the best candidate for the job. It's your opportunity to tell the employer exactly how your training and/or experience qualifies you to do the work. In a covering letter, show that you have the qualifications and/or experience requested in the job ad or job description.

A covering letter usually has eight parts:

1. your name and complete address
2. the date
3. the employer's name and position (if known), company name and complete address
4. greeting, e.g., Dear _____
5. 1st paragraph: tell the employer you are applying for a particular job (state title if known); mention where you heard about the job opening; indicate you're enclosing your resume
6. 2nd and 3rd paragraphs: highlight any work or volunteer experience and training that qualifies you to do the job, and mention any positive comments others have made about your work or performance

7. 4th paragraph: ask for an interview and thank the employer for considering your application
8. close: Sincerely, or Yours truly,

Start each part at the left margin and separate each part with a double space.

***Sample covering letter
(applying for a job as a salesclerk)***

Your name and full address

Date

(Mr., Mrs., Ms.) name of person you are writing to
and their full address

Dear Mr., Mrs., Ms., (last name)

I am very interested in applying for the position of
salesclerk as advertised in the (newspaper) on (date).
My resume is enclosed for your review.

My employment experience includes working in my
uncle's confectionery for the last two summers. I
was responsible for serving customers, handling the
cash and taking inventory. Because of my computer
experience, I was able to help my uncle set up a
computerized cash system. My uncle said he would
recommend me to any employer who wanted a hard
working, conscientious employee.

In school my teachers see me as an outgoing,
enthusiastic person who is well organized. My
participation on school committees helped develop
my ability to work effectively with others. I know I
could bring excellent work skills to the position of
salesclerk with (name of company).

Thank you for considering my application. You
can contact me at (telephone number) to arrange an
interview.

Yours truly,

Your signature; Your name (if word processing)

Employment equity

What's employment equity?

Certain groups of people in Saskatchewan have historically missed out on opportunities for employment that were available to the mainstream population. These groups included persons of Aboriginal descent, persons with disabilities, minority groups (such as Asian, black persons, etc.), and women.

The disadvantages faced by these groups prevent them from participating in the workplace in numbers that reflect the size of their presence in the Saskatchewan population. These groups are still underrepresented in the workforce.

A representative workforce means that if a particular disadvantaged group makes up 20 percent of the working age population, then 20 percent of the workforce should be composed of persons from this group. Employment equity seeks to increase the participation of disadvantaged groups in the workforce.

How do I know if employment equity can help me?

Employment equity may help you if you are a member of one of the groups mentioned and are recognized under human rights.

Many companies today have employment equity programs and many employers ask if you are a member of an equity group when you apply for a job. Often, there's a place on job applications where you can indicate you're an equity group member. Through this self-identification you may be able to apply for those jobs.

Employment equity programs do not change the entrance requirements for jobs. An employment equity applicant must be fully qualified for any position s/he applies for. In a hiring situation where two applicants are equally qualified for a job, the employment equity applicant may be preferred.

Interviews

What's an interview all about?

Interviews are conversations between employers and persons who want to work. An interview is another opportunity, apart from your covering letter, for you to present yourself in a good light and convince the employer that you have the skills and attitude to learn the job and do it well.

Interviews give the employer an opportunity to see if you have what it takes to do the job. If the employer is interviewing several people, it provides an opportunity to see if you are the best candidate for the job.

Parts of an interview:

- introduction: when you introduce yourself to the receptionist, employer, others in the interview
- employer's questions: asks you questions about your previous experience and your skills, etc.
- your questions: ask specific questions about the job
- close: when the interview ends

All parts of the interview have a purpose and importance.

You can improve your chances of being hired for a job by developing the skills you need for each part of the interview.

How can I get ready for an interview?

Preparing for an interview may determine your success in getting a job. It's that important.

Some things you can do:

- Find out about the company you're applying to.

If you know something about the company, the employer will see that you took the time to learn about it. This shows the employer that your interest is more than casual.

- Find out about the job you're applying for.

Learn about the duties of the job and think about how you would handle them. Are there things you've done that would help you do the tasks of the job? Talk to others working in the job.

- Find out the typical questions asked in interviews.

Although no two interviews will be the same, there are standard question lists. Anticipate the questions you will be asked.

- Practice interviews. Ask your friends or family to give you a practice interview. Rehearse your answers to typical questions.
- Learn what's appropriate and what isn't in interviews. Interview etiquette exists. Work on the way you present and handle yourself in an interview. Find out what are appropriate questions and behaviours, and how to handle inappropriate questions if the interviewer asks one.

You can get this information from guidance counsellors, employment centres, libraries and/or organizations noted in this publication.

What questions will an employer ask me?

No two interviews will be the same, so it's impossible to anticipate exactly what questions you will get. Here are some general questions that will help you with many interviews:

- Tell me about yourself (that is, your work experience, training, qualifications for the job).
- What is your greatest strength?
- What weakness do you need to improve?

- Have you done this kind of work before?
- Tell me about the work you've done before.
- What skills do you have that will help you do this job?
- Which machines and equipment can you operate?
- Are you willing to work part-time? (casual, shifts, evenings, weekends)?
- What salary do you need?
- Why do you want to work here?
- Why did you leave your last job?
- How's your health?
- How do you get along with other people at work?
- How do you cope with stress?
- Do you have any problems that would prevent you from doing this job?
- Is there anything that would prevent you from getting to work on time?
- When could you start work?
- What are your future work/career plans?
- Do you have any questions?

You can also expect to be asked some: “What if” questions. These are questions where the interviewer describes a work situation and asks you to come up with a solution to a problem. The interviewer might also ask you how you handled a work situation or problem in the past if you have worked before.

Which questions aren't appropriate?

To discourage and eliminate discrimination in interviews, The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code forbids employers from asking:

- about foreign addresses which would indicate your national origin
- about your place of birth or national origin
- for your photo
- you a question that would cause you to identify a religious affiliation
- about your citizenship status
- about the religious or racial affiliation of educational institutions you attended
- questions that would cause you to reveal your marital or family status
- for any record or other information that would reveal your age

- if you're single, married, engaged, divorced, separated, widowed, living common-law
- about the number of children or other dependents you have
- about your disabilities or health problems
- about your sexual orientation
- if you're receiving social assistance

However, there are questions an employer can ask in these areas during the interview and after you're hired.

For example, during the interview an employer can ask: "Do you have a disability which will affect your ability to perform any of the functions of the job for which you have applied?" If the applicant answers "Yes," then the employer can ask: "What functions can you not perform and what accommodations could be made which would allow you to do the work adequately?"

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code doesn't stop an employer from finding the best person for the job. It prevents employers from asking questions that would eliminate candidates because of stereotypes about who can do the job and who can't.



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The Job Cycle

Starting a job

Are there things I have to pay for when I start working?

If you're working in a situation that requires foot protection, you can be required to buy safety boots. Employers in construction may ask you to do this before you start work.

If you work in a hotel, restaurant, educational institution, hospital or nursing home and a uniform is required as part of your job, your employer must pay for it and arrange for its cleaning and repair. However, this rule does not apply to registered nurses.

What costs will I have to cover while I'm employed?

Normally, you'll have to cover the cost of any food you eat and beverages you drink, the clothing you need to wear on-the-job, and the cost of transportation to and from work. If you finish work between 12:30 a.m. and 7:00 a.m. and you work in a hotel, restaurant, educational institution, hospital or nursing home, your employer is required to provide you with free transportation to your residence.

Some jobs may require that you have your own tools and/or ‘reliable transportation’, and those jobs are often advertised in that way.

Some companies with cafeterias may subsidize the cost of your lunch and snacks for their employees.

Is it O.K. for an employer to take wages for rent?

No, unless you have agreed to it before you start to work. This situation sometimes arises with students who are working at resorts.

Why do I fill-out a TD1 form?

A TD1 form enables your employer to calculate your income tax rate. Your employer sends a portion of your income to the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency (known as Revenue Canada). The Canadian Government uses income tax to provide services throughout the country.

If your income tax rate isn’t calculated ahead of time, you might pay less, or more, than you should. By calculating it before you start work, you pay approximately what you should pay each month. At the end of the year you may get a small refund from Revenue Canada, or you may have to pay a small additional amount.

Your income tax rate is based on your salary or wages and whether or not you have dependents who rely on you for financial support.

Don't forget!

Your employer should ensure that you fill-out a TD1 when you start a job. It's required by law. Make sure that you do fill-out this form and have a copy for your records.

If there's ever a disagreement between you and your employer over tax deducted and the Canada Customs and Revenue Agency investigates it, your TD1 stands as a record of your original agreement for tax deduction with your employer.

First day

What can I expect on my first day at work?

You may find your first day to be a little confusing and unpredictable. A lot depends on whether or not your employer has planned for your arrival and orientation.

Many employers are so busy they overlook the needs of the new worker. Orienting the new worker may be turned over to the supervisor, and s/he may likewise be tied up doing the various parts of his/her job. Some employers have well developed plans for introducing the new worker to the workplace and the job.

You should be given:

- an introduction to your supervisor and other workers
- a tour of the workplace
- a visit to the personnel or human resources office to fill-in forms
- orientation to your job, and
- a safety orientation

Your first day on-the-job can be stressful because you are taking in a lot of new information. You can't expect to remember all of it right away.

What can I do to feel more involved my first day at work?

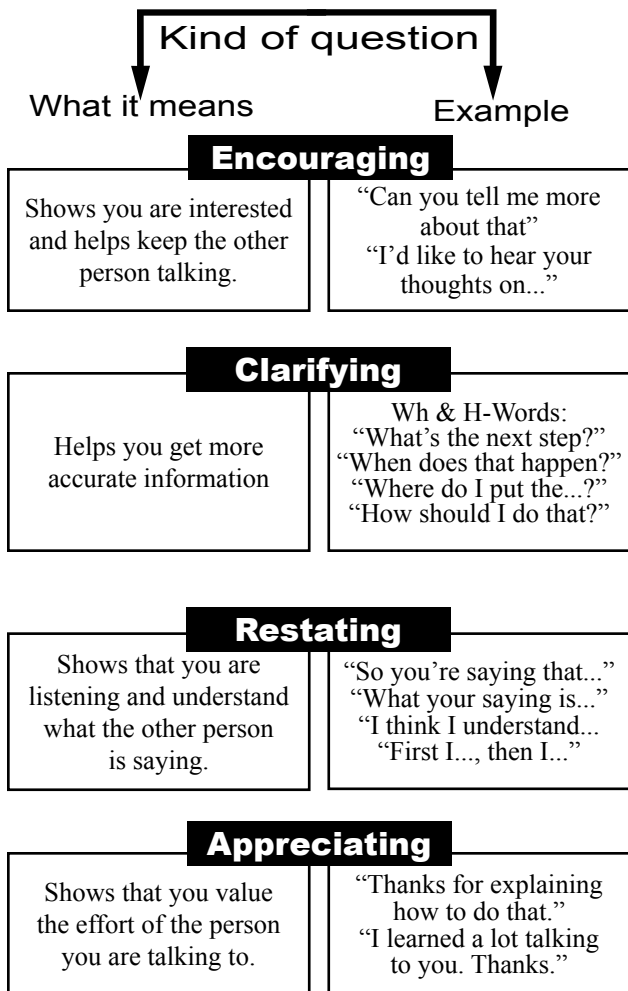
Some of the things you can do:

- Carry a notebook and pen for jotting down people's names and their jobs, or areas of the workplace. This will give you the feeling that you're actually holding onto some of the information you receive that day. It will also distract you from being nervous.
- Although others might find this a little amusing, they will see that you're really interested in learning about the workplace and who's in it. It will also create a positive impression.

- If you're given specific job instructions, and you're afraid you might forget them, jot down the basics.
- Ask questions to learn your job and to stay involved.
- Show a positive attitude toward others in the workplace. An open smile, a definite 'hello, pleased to meet you', and a warm handshake all go a long way to make a good first impression.
- Follow other workers lead in taking your breaks, but don't work through your break if other workers are taking a break. Join them.
- Start looking for a 'buddy' in your work area. A buddy can guide you and teach you the ropes as you learn your new job.

What kind of questions can I ask?

Using ‘active listening questions’ can help you stay involved and keep track of what others are saying at work. Here are four kinds of active listening



It's reasonable to ask your coworker or supervisor to repeat what they've said. It shows that you want to understand what's going on, and you want to do things correctly.

What if someone “yells” at me?

Things we're not used to sometimes happen at work. You need to try to understand them, put them in the right context, and then decide if you want to do something about them.

Workplaces operate under deadlines and the pressure to produce. That pressure often gets laid on the shoulders of supervisors and workers. Getting yelled at isn't pleasant, but it may not be a comment on your competence. It may be a sign that your coworker or supervisor is stressed-out or has to yell to be heard. Good supervisors and employers, however, don't resort to unnecessary loudness when speaking to workers.

Also, workplaces where the employees operate machines or equipment can create loud, distracting noises. If you're wearing protective earplugs, which you should, it's even more difficult to hear someone who's talking to you. Your supervisor may talk to you at a volume higher than necessary even when you're out of the work environment, say on your coffee break.

If you're working in any sort of busy physical environment, you may be surprised and a bit shocked at the abrupt communication style of others. You may just have to adjust and live without the niceties of communication. Don't take it personally.

If you find the loudness of someone's communication distracts you from your work, that's another matter. In that case you might want to say something like:

“When you speak so loudly, I lose my concentration. I can hear you when you speak at a lower volume.”

Adjusting to some work situations means accepting a different social etiquette. However, abusive language, such as insults, racial slurs or sexist comments, are never acceptable.



Rights and responsibilities for safety

Rights

You have three basic rights as a worker:

1. You have the right to know about the hazards of your job. You should know how to recognize and deal with those hazards so they won't cause injury or health problems to you or others.
2. You have the right to participate in health and safety in the workplace. Your supervisor and employer should consult with you on matters that affect your safety as a worker. This makes sense because you, as a worker, perform the everyday tasks and face the hazards directly. You can point to health and safety situations you're concerned about, and your employer or supervisor has to assess them.
3. You have the right to refuse work that you believe to be unusually dangerous to yourself and others. This is one of your most important rights – it can save your life.

An unusual danger can be:

- a danger that is not normal for the job
- a danger that would normally stop work

- a situation you aren't trained, equipped, or competent to deal with

Your rights are set in law to keep you and other workers safe and healthy. Employers cannot discipline you for exercising your rights. Use them wisely.

Responsibilities

Your responsibilities go hand-in-hand with your rights. Together they are your best defense against a workplace situation that could seriously injure you or leave you with a long-term disability.

As a general rule, you have a responsibility to work and act safely while at work. Some of your specific responsibilities:

- Take the safety training the employer offers you.
- Always follow safe work procedures.
- Use equipment the way it was intended to be used.
- Wear all appropriate personal protective equipment (PPE).
- Take care for your health and safety, and also for the health and safety of other workers who are affected by your actions.

- Report any unsafe equipment or other hazards.
- Cooperate with those who are responsible for health and safety in your workplace.
- Avoid doing anything that might harass or offend another person in the workplace.

Your workplace may have an Occupational Health Committee (OHC) if there are 10 or more workers, or a Health and Safety Representative. Some high risk workplaces, such as building construction, mining, and logging, must have a Health and Safety Representative if there are five to nine workers.

OHCs and Health and Safety Representatives help maintain the overall safety of your workplace. They need your involvement to do their work properly.

Safe on-the-job

What safety training should I be given when I begin a job?

Your employer should provide you with orientation and training in everything necessary to protect your health and safety.

Health and safety training should include:

- hazards in the workplace that may affect you

- safety procedures and practices that apply to your work
- location of the first aid supplies and/or facilities
- procedures to use if there is a fire or other emergency
- identification of restricted or prohibited areas
- how to use personal protective equipment and maintain it
- procedures for reporting hazards and accidents, and
- close supervision by a competent person to ensure that you have been trained and have enough experience to perform the work safely

What if I don't feel I'm trained well enough to do a job?

If you're asked to do a task and you know you don't know how to do it, immediately ask for training before you start the job.

Let's say you've been asked to do something, and it's not until you actually start doing it that you realize it's beyond your present ability. Do the same as above. Ask for training before you continue.

If no one's available, do something else that you're comfortable with until someone can train you. If there's nothing else you can do in your job, ask other workers if you can help them with simple, safe tasks you know you can handle.

Never take on a task you don't know how to do when there's a risk of injury. No job is worth risking your health and safety.

If someone pushes you to do the task, or suggests you'll get punished because you're not doing your assigned work, resist the urge to start working. Remember, you have the right to refuse work that you honestly think is unusually dangerous, and the law prohibits the employer from punishing you for doing so.

What's a 'hazard' and what kinds of hazards should I look out for?

A hazard is any activity, situation or substance that can cause harm. There are two main kinds of hazards: health hazards and safety hazards. Generally, health hazards cause occupational illnesses, such as hearing loss from noise, while safety hazards cause injuries, such as cuts, broken bones, etc. Since all workplaces have hazards, be aware of the potential hazards at your workplace.

What are some common health hazards?

There are five types of health hazards:

1. Chemical hazards, such as battery acid and solvents
2. Biological hazards, such as bacteria, dusts and molds
3. Physical agents (energy sources), such as electrical currents, heat, vibration, noise and radiation
4. Work design or ergonomic hazards, and
5. Workplace stress

Health hazards may cause serious and immediate effects, or they may cause long-term problems. Someone who develops an occupational illness, resulting from contact with a health hazard, may not recognize the symptoms immediately.

What should I know about safety hazards?

Safety hazards can cause injuries. An injury caused by a safety hazard is generally obvious. Safety hazards cause harm when workplace controls are inadequate. Some examples of safety hazards include:

- slipping/tripping hazards
- fire and explosion hazards

- moving parts of machinery, tools and equipment
- working at height
- vehicles, such as forklifts and trucks
- lifting and other manual handling operations
- hazards of working alone or in isolated spaces, and
- materials falling from height

How am I protected from hazards?

Your employer is responsible for protecting you from health and safety hazards by providing suitable equipment, health and safety orientation, training, and appropriate supervision.

What's my role in controlling hazards?

You are responsible for working and acting safely while at work and carrying out the specific responsibilities listed earlier. You must also take these steps to recognize, assess, and control hazards:

1. See it!

To help you recognize hazards in the workplace keep the following in mind:

- Look for hazardous substances and unsafe conditions in the workplace.

- Ask about past accidents and near accidents in the workplace.
- Read any product literature and information from suppliers.
- Check out old, new or unfamiliar equipment before using it.
- Learn about the working conditions of the workplace from coworkers, supervisors and the employer.

2. **Think it!**

Assess the hazard's risk of harm. Ask yourself:

- Is it likely or unlikely to cause harm?
- Could it cause death, serious injury or minor injury?

3. **Do it!**

Always ask what is the proper way to do the task. You may deal with some hazards directly. Others should be reported to your supervisor. For example, you can wipe up water spilled on the floor, clear a passageway that's cluttered with wood pieces, put trash in the garbage, etc. More dangerous hazards must be reported to your supervisor or employer. In some workplaces, hazards are also reported to the Occupational Health and Safety Committee or the Health and Safety Representative.

How am I protected from hazardous materials in the workplace?

Your workplace may have hazardous materials you need to know about. Hazardous materials are any substances that can cause illness, injury or death to workers who aren't protected.

In Canada, we are fortunate to have the Workplace Hazardous Materials Information System (WHMIS). All employers are required to protect their workers and themselves by using WHMIS information to develop safe work procedures.

WHMIS provides you with critical information about the hazardous materials you work with on-the-job.

WHMIS has three parts to help you identify and handle hazardous materials safely:

- labels that supply warning information
- Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDSs) that tell you how to handle emergencies, clean-ups, and how to use hazardous materials safely, and
- worker education that helps you understand how to use WHMIS

As a worker, you have a responsibility to use WHMIS to protect yourself from hazardous materials.

Use the label system, check the hazards in the data sheets, and follow the safety procedures that the employer has developed.

How can I be involved in safety once I'm working?

Carry out your responsibilities for health and safety, and you'll make a significant contribution to the workplace. You can also participate in your company's Occupational Health Committee (OHC). These committees help workers and employers work together to identify, eliminate and reduce workplace hazards.

Your employer is required to have an OHC if the company has 10 or more workers. An OHC must have between two and twelve members, and at least half of the members must be workers. OHCs must have two co-chairpersons: one selected by the employer and the other selected by the workers.

You might ask, "What exactly do these committees do?"

Some of an OHCs activities are:

- conducting inspections regularly
- talking with workers about their safety concerns
- helping employers identify, assess and control hazards

- recommending ways to improve workplace health and safety to the employer, and
- investigating accidents, dangerous occurrences and work refusals

When OHCs meet, they write out the ‘minutes’ of the meeting. Within two weeks of the meeting, the minutes must be posted in the workplace where workers can see them. The minutes are reviewed by others responsible for the workplace.

Participating on an OHC will give you a larger picture of the workplace and make you a more skilled employee. It’s something you can put on your resume when you apply for your next job.

Workplaces with less than 10 workers should have a Health and Safety Representative. Small auto-body shops, construction businesses and logging operations are examples of higher hazard workplaces with five to nine workers that must have a Health and Safety Representative.

What safety things should I be aware of every day I work?

Questions about common hazards:

- Is the workplace uncluttered and organized?
- Do you know and follow safety procedures when handling or using electrical equipment and power cords?

- When you use machines or equipment, are you allowed to work without distraction?
- If you have to provide your own tools, do you know what tools are acceptable to your employer?
- Do you know how to recognize toxic or infectious substances?
- Are hazardous materials or substances handled and used in a safe way?
- Do workers smoke only in areas designated for smoking?
- Do you know and follow the fire safety rules?
- Do workers walk (rather than run) in work areas?
- Is there any horseplay that could result in an accident?
- Do you have safe access to the worksite and safe exit from it?

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

- Do you know what PPE you need for the job you're doing?
- Do you have the knowledge necessary to use PPE properly?

- Is the PPE in good condition and working properly?
- Does it fit properly?
- Is the PPE maintained and replaced when damaged?

Ergonomics

- When you're working for an extended period of time, do you have adequate body support, e.g., proper chair?
- Is the ventilation, lighting and temperature adequate to work comfortably?
- Can you organize your workspace to do your job effectively?
- Are you doing your work in a way that minimizes stress and strain on your body?
- Do you use the right tool for the job?
- Do you handle and use tools and equipment properly?
- Is your posture correct for the work you're doing?
- Do you use safe practices when lifting and moving objects?

- Do you use aids (lifts, dollies) or get help from other workers to avoid straining your back when lifting or moving heavy things?
- Do you work at a reasonable pace?
- Do you take regular breaks when doing tasks that require repetitive movements?

Safe operation/maintenance of equipment

- Are you authorized to operate the equipment or machinery?
- Do you know the hazards of operating the equipment or machinery?
- Do you know the correct operating procedures and safety precautions before operating a piece of equipment or machinery?
- Do you report unsafe, worn or broken tools, equipment and machinery to your supervisor (and use only safe ones)?

Fire regulations and equipment

- Do you know the fire drill procedures?
- Do you know the locations of all fire extinguishers, fire-pull stations and fire exits?
- Do you know which fire extinguishers to use for different fires?

First aid

- Do you know the emergency procedures and first aid rules for your workplace?
- Do you know the closest first aid kit and the designated first aid attendant?
- Are all accidents reported to your employer as soon as possible?

Human rights

What are my human rights?

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code protects you from being treated differently from others in employment because of your:

- age
- creed
- nationality
- sexual orientation
- family status
- disability
(physical or mental)
- receipt of public
assistance
- ancestry (aboriginal)
- sex (gender or
pregnancy)
- marital status
- ancestry (includes
perceived race and
colour, place of origin)
- religion

This means that employers cannot discriminate against you in the hiring process or during your employment for any of the reasons above.

Your right to equal treatment applies to interviews, advertising, application forms, hiring, wages, promotions, dismissals, fringe benefits and freedom from harassment.

What if I believe I've been discriminated against?

If you believe that you've been discriminated against, check your perception of what actually happened. You can do that by talking to the person(s) involved. Their explanation may lead you to understand that you weren't discriminated against. If you aren't satisfied with the explanation and still believe you were discriminated against, you may file a complaint with the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission.

As your first step, however, always try to resolve things in the workplace before seeking outside assistance. Asking for advice and assistance from your supervisor or others at work may lead to a quicker and earlier resolution of the problem.

How do I submit a complaint?

If you think you've been discriminated against, you may submit a complaint to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission.

Follow these steps:

- Contact the Human Rights Commission nearest you.
- An intake person will assess your complaint to decide if they can proceed.
- If so, they will immediately contact the employer to determine if the matter can be resolved.
- If it cannot be resolved, the matter will be referred to an investigator for follow up.
- The parties may be asked to mediate at any point in the process.
- If the complaint is substantiated but does not settle, the matter could be referred to a Tribunal for adjudication (decision).
- If a complaint is dismissed, the complainant may still have a right to ask the Tribunal to hear the case.

Does the employer have to respect my needs?

Yes, in certain cases. If you have a mental or a physical disability, you may have ‘special needs’ in doing your job. Employers must assist people with special needs. That assistance is called ‘accommodation’.

A common example of a physical accommodation is the wide doors to washrooms that make them accessible to persons using wheelchairs. Another example is the employer who supplies a blind person with computer software where s/he hears voice commands from the computer speakers.

The human environment of a workplace may have to be changed to accommodate a person with a perceptual disability. If an employee had a certain kind of reading problem, for example, an employer might provide an oral application form on tape instead of a written one.

Other examples

Employers can accommodate the needs of single parents (family status) with school age children by allowing them to take work home or work hours that allow them to be home when their children get home.

Making it possible for pregnant women to avoid heavy lifting tasks is an example of how an employer can accommodate someone with a need related to their sex (pregnancy).

Employees who celebrate different religious holidays may be given the opportunity to take time off on those days and possibly make up the hours missed on other workdays or weekends. This is how an employer could show respect for an employee's need to celebrate his/her religious holidays.

These are examples of how workers can meet the requirements of their jobs in a way that is different from how workers have traditionally met them. This flexibility on the part of employers reflects their understanding of their workers' diverse needs and their willingness to respect those needs. Different ways of showing respect will eventually become more a part of the general culture of work rather than being required by law.

Unions

There are workplace unions in many countries. About one in three Saskatchewan workers belong to a union. A union is an organization that bargains collectively with an employer on behalf of employees. Workers in a workplace may choose to be represented by a union. The employer and the union negotiate a **collective agreement** that covers things like wages, hours of work, layoff procedures, hiring, health and other matters of mutual concern.

The Trade Union Act governs the rules for forming or joining a union. *The Trade Union Act* says that employees have the right to join or form unions.

The Labour Relations Board certifies a trade union, giving it the exclusive right to represent employees. Unions can be dissolved through a decertification process. *The Trade Union Act* outlines the rules regarding what employers and employees can do during certification or decertification. The Labour Relations Board settles disputes.

A union is often referred to as a **bargaining unit**. When you start a job, ask your employer if the workplace is unionized and if your job is within the bargaining unit. If yes:

- get a copy of the collective agreement
- know who your union representative (often called a “shop steward”) is

A union is a democratic organization, and you can be:

- provided with opportunities to discuss things about your employment
- allowed to run for election to union positions, and
- allowed to participate in votes on important items such as collective agreement proposals, strikes or other job actions

As a union member, you may be expected to:

- keep up-to-date on union matters
- participate at union meetings, and
- vote on union issues and abide by the decision of the majority

As a member of the bargaining unit, you'll pay regular dues to cover the costs of bargaining and other services. Union dues are taken off your paycheck. Dues vary among unions, but they are usually a small percentage of your gross pay.



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The Job Cycle

Pay and benefits

Minimum wage

The minimum wage is \$7.95/hour as of Mar 1, 2007.

Equal pay

Male and female employees are entitled to equal pay when they perform similar work:

- in the same establishment
- under similar working conditions, and
- requiring similar skill, effort and responsibility

“Similar” means “resembling in many respects” or “alike,” although not necessarily identical.

Exceptions can be made where payment is based on a seniority or merit system.

Who gets overtime pay?

In most work situations, you get overtime pay if you work more than:

- eight hours per day, or
- 40 hours per week

For weeks where there is a public holiday, you get overtime pay after 32 hours of work.

Do I get overtime no matter what job I'm doing?

You don't get paid for overtime if you work in certain jobs including:

- managers or employees working as professionals, and
- people working north of the 62nd township (You are paid overtime, though, if you live in La Ronge, Creighton or Uranium City, or within a 10 km radius of La Ronge, Creighton, or Uranium City.)

Exemptions apply in other industries. Check with your nearest Labour Standards Office.

Special rules apply to people who do certain kinds of work, including ambulance attendants, fire fighters, oil truck drivers and newspaper workers. If you're a highway construction worker, you receive overtime after working 100 hours in a two week period.

How much do I get paid for overtime work?

Your overtime pay rate is 1.5 times your hourly rate of pay.

What if I report to work, and there's no work to do?

You will probably receive minimum call-out pay (other than for overtime) each time you report for work. The minimum call-out is based on three times the current minimum wage which is \$23.85 (Mar 1, 2007). This does not apply if you're a full-time student, except during the summer holidays.

Will I receive a written record of my pay?

Your employer should provide you with a pay sheet (pay stub) that shows:

- the amount you earned during the pay period before anything was taken off your paycheck (This is called your 'gross pay').
- what was deducted from your gross pay (These are called 'deductions').
- your 'net pay' or 'take home pay' (This your gross pay minus deductions).

Check each pay sheet you receive. To check the accuracy of a pay sheet, you need to keep a record of the number of hours you worked in that pay period. If you have any concerns about your pay sheet, talk to your employer right away. It's easier to fix mistakes at that point.

Hold onto your pay sheets. Don't throw them out.

Depending on your pay schedule, you will probably receive a pay sheet:

- bi-weekly (which means every two weeks)
- monthly (once a month)

What will my employer deduct from my paycheck?

Some common deductions, all required by law, are:

- CPP or Canada Pension Plan
- EI or Employment Insurance
- income tax, and
- union dues, if you belong to a union

Your pay statement will be a separate or detachable statement from your paycheque. Keep it for your records.

Explanation of terms

Name of Employee	Your Name
Name of Employer	Name of the company or organization you work for.
Earning	Kind of earning, for example, salary, vacation pay, bonus, tips, commission.
Number of Hours	Number of hours worked. On some pay statements, where time is broken into units or hours, this is called 'number of units' or 'number of hours'.
Amount	Total for that kind of earning (hourly rate X number of hours).
Deduction	Amounts taken off your cheque for different reasons. The most common deductions, which you will see on every paycheque: Canada Pension Plan or CPP, Employment Insurance or EI, and Income Tax. Other deductions often include: Union Dues, if you're a member of a union; Life Insurance, in the event that you die on-the-job; Long-term Disability insurance, in the event that you are seriously injured or develop an long-term illness and can't work.

Year to Date	The total deductions in each category since the beginning of the year (optional).
Total Earnings	Your total earnings in the current pay period.
Total Deductions	Total taken off your cheque this pay period and since the beginning of the year.
Pay Period	The time you're being paid for on this pay statement, for example, Apr. 1 – Apr. 15.
Pay Date	Date the cheque is issued.
Net Pay	Your 'take home' pay after all deductions.

Sample pay sheet

Name of Employee				Name of Employer			
Earning	No. of Hours	Hourly Rate	Amount	Deduction	Amount	Year to Date	
Salary				CPP			
Overtime				EI			
Vacation				Income Tax			
Gross Pay				Union Dues			
				Life Insurance			
Total Earnings				Long Term Disability			
				Total Deductions			
Pay Period		Pay Date		NetPay			

Will I receive any ‘benefits’?

Some employers offer employees benefits that are consistent with their position and salary level. Some common benefits are:

- short-term and/or long-term disability
- supplementary medical and/or dental services
- company pension plan, and
- insurance, if you die

With benefits, working 30 hours per week or more counts as full-time employment.

If your employer has a business with 10 or more employees, s/he must provide the same benefits to part-time employees on a prorated basis as s/he provides to full-time.

As a part-time employee what level of benefits do I receive?

You get 50% of the benefits full-time workers receive if you work between 15 and 30 hours a week. If you work 30 hours or more a week, you get the same level of benefits as full-time employees.

If some of the benefits you receive require that you make employee contributions, you’ll need to make

them the same way as full-time employees. Often, employers take the employee contributions from their monthly paycheck. As a part-time employee, the contributions you make will be in proportion to the level of the benefits you receive.

How do I qualify to receive benefits as a part-time employee?

You must have been employed by the same employer for 26 consecutive weeks and have worked at least 390 hours in those 26 weeks.

Can I qualify for benefits if I'm a full-time student?

No. You aren't eligible for benefits if you have 60% (or more) of a full course load at a school, university, technical institute, regional college or private vocational school.



Work schedule

What should I know about my work schedule?

A work schedule outlines the hours, days and shifts you will work. Shifts refer to periods of work time during the 24-hour day. Common shifts include: day, night, graveyard (starts at midnight), early morning shift and split shift. In a split shift, a person works for two shorter periods in the 24-hour cycle.

Will I know my work schedule ahead of time?

Yes. Your employer must give you your work schedule in writing or by posting it at least one week in advance. Your schedule should include the time(s) for meal breaks. If your employer changes your work schedule, s/he should give you at least one week's notice (except for a sudden or unusual occurrence).

What's full-time work? Part-time?

The general public understands full-time work to mean that you work an eight hour day, five days of the week.

Like full-time employees, part-time regular employees may work everyday. Part-time workers may, therefore, work every day but have fewer hours of work in a year.

A casual worker generally works less than a part-time worker. S/he may be on call and asked to work when others are sick or on holidays. Alternately, a casual worker may be called in for a length of time to help when things are very busy.

A term position means that the employer has hired the worker for a definite period, often under a year.

The meaning of these different terms varies among workplaces. It's always a good idea to find out exactly what they mean by asking your employer. It's a good idea, too, to find out how many hours you'll be working each day and each week you're employed.

How many hours can I work in a week?

You can work as many hours as you want if the work's available and the employer consents to it. However, that would not be a good decision in terms of your health and safety on-the-job. Besides, you are legally entitled to certain breaks.

Here are some general rules:

- If you work 20 hours or more per week, you're entitled to 24 hours in a row away from work once every seven days.
- If you're employed in the retail trade, you get two consecutive days off every seven days. This rule applies only to retail businesses with 10 or more employees.

How many hours do I have to work in a week?

You don't have to work for your employer more than 44 hours a week unless there's an emergency. Emergencies are sudden and unusual events that could not have been anticipated by your employer.

In a week that includes a public holiday, you do not have to work more than 36 hours. In both the 44-hour and the 36-hour week, you may work more if there's work to do and your employer agrees to it.

What breaks can I take?

Breaks in the 24-hour cycle

- You're entitled to a rest break of eight hours in a row in any period of 24 hours (unless there's an emergency).

Meal breaks

- If you work six hours or more, you're entitled to a meal break of at least 30 minutes within every five hours of work. Your employer is not required to pay you for meal breaks. However, s/he must pay you if s/he asks you to work during your meal break and you agree to do so.

Coffee breaks

- Your employer decides whether or not you get coffee breaks. If s/he gives you coffee breaks, s/he must pay you for that time.



Holidays, vacation and time off work

What do I need to know about holidays, annual vacation and time off work?

What about public holidays?

Your employer may ask you to work on a public holiday. If you work on a public holiday, you get overtime pay for all hours worked plus public holiday pay.

There are ten public holidays a year in Saskatchewan:

- New Year's Day - January 1st
- Good Friday - The Friday before Easter Sunday
- Family Day - The 3rd Monday in February
- Victoria Day - The Monday before May 25th
- Canada Day - July 1st, (If July 1st is a Sunday, then July 2nd)
- Saskatchewan Day - 1st Monday in August
- Labour Day - 1st Monday in September
- Thanksgiving Day - 2nd Monday in October
- Remembrance Day - November 11th
- Christmas Day - December 25th

Will I get holiday pay?

Public holiday pay is 1/20 of your regular wages (excluding overtime) in the four weeks before the public holiday. If you're a construction worker, your employer will calculate your holiday pay as 4% of all your wages (excluding overtime and annual vacation pay) earned that calendar year.

What if I work on a public holiday?

You'll get paid time and a half for all hours worked plus public holiday pay. This calculation doesn't apply to workers who operate well drilling rigs.

Can I celebrate my own religion's holidays?

In Saskatchewan there are two paid religious holidays: Good Friday and Christmas Day. If you want to celebrate any other religious holiday, your employer has a responsibility to accommodate your request as long as it doesn't cause the employer undue hardship.

The best solution is to negotiate with your employer for the time off. Tell your employer about your religion, its customs, and the days off you wish to take.

It may be difficult for your employer to pay you for religious holidays in addition to Good Friday and Christmas Day.

Your employer may be willing to give you time off without pay.

The most important thing to remember here is to talk with your employer about your religious customs, and try to work out something that's reasonable and satisfactory to both of you.

What about annual vacation?

If *The Labour Standards Act* applies to your workplace, you get annual holiday pay.

The Labour Standards Act applies to most Saskatchewan employees and employers, except

- workers employed primarily in farming, ranching or market gardening, and
- those covered by *The Canada Labour Code*

The Canada Labour Code (Labour Standards) applies to employees in the following and other industries:

- inter-provincial and international services such as railways; highway transport; pipelines; telephone, telegraph and cable systems; shipping and shipping services
- radio and television broadcasting

- air transport
- banks
- most grain elevators, flour and seed mills
- uranium mining and processing
- most federal crown corporations, and
- the federal public service

How many days do I get for annual vacation?

You get a minimum of three weeks after each year of employment. If you've worked 10 years with the same employer, you get a minimum of four weeks off.

Do I get paid for my annual vacation?

Yes. The amount of your annual holiday pay is based on your total wage for a 12-month period.

When do I receive my annual vacation pay?

You'll receive it:

- during the 14 days before you start your annual holiday
- within 11 months after you earn your annual holidays, or
- within 14 days of your termination

Some employers may give you the choice of receiving vacation pay on each paycheck or at the time you take your vacation. This will show on your statement of earnings.

Can I take time off work besides holidays and vacation?

Generally speaking, your employer will prefer you to schedule your dentist and doctor appointments outside of work time. If you have to schedule them during your normal working hours, you may be expected to make up that time either outside your normal working day or take the time off without pay.

In all cases, it's important to let your employer know what you're doing. Check ahead of time with your employer to see if it's OK to schedule health appointments during working hours.

If you're interested in taking time off of work for other reasons that mean you'll be absent from work for a day or more, check with your employer first. You may be able to take leave without pay. Likewise, your employer may approve a leave without pay for your attendance at a course that isn't related to your job.

An employer may be more willing to giving you time off if the reason will benefit the business, such as taking training related to your work. In that instance, your employer might cover all or part of the costs and may even pay your wages in full or part.

Something to always remember: Your employer expects an honest day's work for the money s/he is paying you. Taking time off without your employer's permission and stretching out coffee or lunch breaks does not honour this principle, and your employer will notice it.

If someone dies, can I go to the funeral?

If the person who dies is a member of your immediate family and you've worked for the employer for three months or more, you're entitled to 'bereavement leave' of up to five working days without pay. You must take bereavement leave in the period from one week before the funeral to one week after the funeral.

Even though you're entitled to leave in this situation, you still need to give your employer as much advance notice as you can that you won't be available for work due to a death in your immediate family.

Your immediate family includes:

- your spouse
- parents, grandparents, children, brothers and sisters of you (the employee) or your spouse

If the person who dies isn't a member of your 'immediate family', then your employer must approve your leaving work to attend the funeral.

Most employers will be compassionate and understand if you were close to the person who died, but they may expect you to make up the work time or to take time without pay.

Sick or injured

What if I get sick on-the-job?

If you're sick and can't work, your employer should allow you time off from work to get better. You're entitled to a minimum of 12 days of sick leave without pay per year.

Saskatchewan's *Labour Standards Act* provides working people up to 12 weeks of job-protected leave in a year to recover from their own illness or injury or to care for a seriously ill or injured family member.

Employees receiving federal Employment Insurance compassionate care benefits may also be eligible for job-protected leave. Please contact the Labour Standards Branch for more information.

Your employer has no legal obligation to pay your wages while you're off the job. It's a good idea to check ahead of time so you know your employer's sick leave policy.

Sick leave isn't like a public holiday or vacation leave that you get paid for. Sick leave should only be used for its real purpose – to recover from illness or to get needed medical attention.

What if I'm injured and can't work?

The Workers' Compensation Act covers most workers in Saskatchewan. Employers must pay insurance premiums, based on the type of work.

The Act covers all full-time, part-time and seasonal employees as soon as they start work and/or, as long as their occupations or the industries are covered under the Act.

Some occupations and industries, such as artists and poultry farms, are not covered. Check with the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) if you're not sure whether your job is covered.

The WCB considers each work injury on an individual basis. In most cases, however, compensation would apply to injuries that occur while a worker is:

- at work
- on company premises, or
- on company business

What does Workers' Compensation cover?

It covers your medical costs, including prescription drugs, doctor's fees, hospital expenses and a large portion of the salary you're likely to lose.

It also provides financial support if you're permanently impaired, death benefits if you die, and benefits to your wife or husband if you die.

WCB provides employment services if you need help to return to work.

The WCB worker can help by:

- assessing your physical abilities and skills
- looking at ways for you to return to work in the early phases of your rehabilitation
- developing a return-to-work plan, and providing benefits and incentives to support your return-to-work plan

Check what insurance your employer has and what it will cover if you're unable to work due to injury. If s/he doesn't have insurance and you're injured, you may have to take legal action against your employer for lost wages and the cost of your medical care and rehabilitation.

Important steps to take if you're injured

1. Get medical attention if you need it.
2. Report the incident to your employer immediately.
3. Fill-out the Worker's Initial Report of Injury (W1) as soon as possible. Submit it to the Saskatchewan WCB.

WCB will assign you a case manager. Stay in contact with that person.

Worker's Initial Report of Injury

The Worker's Initial Report of Injury has the following headings:

- A. Worker Information: includes name, address, SIN, etc.
- B. Employer Information: name, address, contact person
- C. Injury Information: details of how injury happened
- D. Wage and Employment Information: sources of income and time off due to injury, etc.
- E. Direct Deposit Information: bank, address
- F. Declaration: as to truth of information provided

What if I have a serious accident, and can't work for a long time?

If your injury prevents you from working, you'll be compensated for your loss of earnings. This compensation will continue until you're 65 years old. If your employer doesn't have insurance with WCB, s/he may have 'long-term disability' insurance.

What if I'm having trouble with my WCB claim?

Talk to your WCB case manager first about any concerns you have about your claim. If you disagree with a WCB decision, try to work it out with the help of your case manager.

If you've tried different ways to resolve your problem and you're not satisfied with the outcome, you can contact the Office of the Worker's Advocate.

This Office can give you information and advice about the problem you're having with a worker's compensation claim. The Worker's Advocate can investigate a claim, give you advice on what to do and help you with an appeal.

The Office of the Worker's Advocate is one avenue of appeal. Other persons, such as your friends, your family or your lawyer can also help you with an appeal.

Smoking, drinking, drugs

Can I smoke at work?

The employer is required to take action to minimize workers' exposure to second hand tobacco smoke.

This can be achieved by ensuring that workers do not smoke in an enclosed part of the workplace other than in well ventilated, designated areas.

Ask about your employer's policy on smoking, and follow it.

If the employer has not taken adequate action to minimize workers' exposure and the smoke bothers or affects you, raise the issue with the Occupational Health Committee or Health and Safety Representative.

What if someone at work is impaired due to alcohol or drugs?

Drinking during the workday or coming to work under the influence of alcohol or drugs can have grave consequences for you, the other employees and the business. A worker abusing alcohol or drugs can cause:

- accidents

- injuries or death, and
- costly damage to property, equipment and materials

If you see that a co-worker's performance is impaired at work due to alcohol or drugs, advise your supervisor or, if your supervisor has the problem, advise the company manager.

Many employers will help their employees get into rehabilitation programs and reassign them to work when they're ready. Helping employees deal with their problems and get back to work benefits everyone – the worker gets better and keeps his/her job, and the employer holds onto a trained, skilled employee.

Employee Assistance Programs (EAP) provide services to workers who have problems with alcohol.

Stress

In the workplace?

You experience workplace stress when the demands of the work situation exceed your ability to cope with them.

Although workplace stress seems to have increased, there has been a corresponding increase in strategies and support systems to help workers deal with the stress of work. As a new or young worker it's important to:

- know what's available to help you cope with stress and
- develop solutions for managing stress that fit you

People's lives have become more complex and demanding outside their work life. This has spilled over into their work life, increasing the stress level of the workplace.

We must recognize, as well, that a moderate amount stress can be positive and motivating. Our task is not to eliminate all stress, but to make any negative stress manageable.

What are some ways of coping with stress in the workplace?

Make sure you have a healthy life outside of work. Some everyday stress reducers include:

- regular exercise
- healthy, balanced diet
- meditation or prayer
- counseling, and
- listening to relaxation/stress reduction tapes

Modern workplaces create opportunities for their employees to participate in stress reducing activity.

Some examples are:

- gyms and organized sports
- quiet rooms, noise controls
- pleasant work environments
- ergonomically sound work stations, and
- flexible work schedules

Make sure you have a stress reducing strategy that works for you. Don't lose sight of it. Make stress management a priority in your life, and you will continue to be a productive employee.

Your employer will see you as a valuable contributor to the business, a factor that will increase your chances of success and promotion.

Keep a mental note of what you do to cope with stress. You may be asked about it in your next job interview.

What's harassment?

Both *The Occupational Health and Safety Act* and *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* protect workers from harassment.

According to *The Occupational Health and Safety Act, 1993*, someone harasses you at work when:

- S/he does something to you that you find objectionable (a comment, gesture, action, or display, e.g., a poster).
- S/he does it on the basis of one of the areas protected by *The Occupational Health & Safety Act* (see list below).
- What s/he does constitutes a threat to your health or safety. Health can be understood as referring to your physical and mental well being and, more broadly, to the health of the work environment.

The Occupational Health and Safety Act protects people from harassment based on:

- race
- creed
- religion
- colour
- sex
- disability
- age
- sexual orientation
- physical size or weight
- family status
- ancestry
- place of origin
- nationality
- marital status

The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code protects people from harassment based on:

- age
- creed
- sexual orientation
- family status
- disability (physical or mental)
- receipt of public assistance
- ancestry (aboriginal)
- sex (gender or pregnancy)
- religion
- marital status
- ancestry (includes perceived race and colour, place of origin)

Neither *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* nor *The Occupational Health and Safety Act* cover ‘personal harassment’ where a worker is treated differently simply because someone doesn’t like him or her.

What should I do if someone harasses me?

If you're at work, follow these steps without delay:

- Tell the harasser to stop. Do this right away. You can do it by saying it or writing it in a letter or e-mail. If this can't be done or isn't successful, take the next step.
- Tell your employer or the person your employer has appointed to receive and handle harassment complaints.
- Talk about it to someone you trust. (a co-worker, a friend, a relative)
- Write it down. Write down each remark (the exact words if you remember them) or action. Record dates, times, places and the names of any witnesses. This information will help you make your case if an investigation follows.

What about violence at work?

If someone threatens you, touches you without permission or acts violently toward you, you may be a victim of assault. You can experience violence directly as a victim or indirectly as an observer.

Am I protected?

The law requires some workplaces, generally those considered to be high risk, to have a violence prevention policy.

‘High risk’ includes these services: transit and taxi, pharmacy, education, police, corrections, other law enforcement, security, crisis counseling and intervention, some health care facilities, places where alcoholic beverages are sold or consumed and places that are open late at night.

If you work in one of these places, your employer must show that s/he is really committed to protecting the health and safety of all workers who may have to deal with violent situations.

How can I be protected?

Your employer should make you aware of all potential risks and train you to deal with them in the safest way. Some of the things you should be advised about are:

- preventing violent incidents from happening (such as making deposits, working alone, parking at work, working at night)

- recognizing and dealing with potentially violent situations if you are in a job where you might encounter them (such as dealing with angry customers, or shoplifters)
- how to respond to violent incidents and get help (such as what to do during and after a robbery)
- how to report violent incidents

Some things that your employer might do to ensure your safety include:

- having security alarms and monitoring systems
- posting signs to advertise security systems
- adequate lighting around the workplace and, in particular, at the back doors
- lowering store shelves to five feet to improve visibility
- posting signs showing ‘maximum cash on premises is \$50’
- moving the cash to the front door to improve visibility, and
- installing a height strip at all front doors to help estimate the height of a robber or shoplifter.

What should I know about shift work?

If you're working outside the normal daytime working hours of 7 a.m. to 6 p.m., you're doing shift work. Shift work interferes with the normal rhythm of your body's internal clock.

Shift work can harm three parts of your life:

- work
- health
- home

At work, your alertness, decision making and performance may falter. Fatigue will increase the risk of accidents and injuries to you and other workers.

Shift work may lead to stomach problems (particularly ulcers), heart problems, insomnia, poor quality sleep and drug and alcohol abuse.

Shift work can hurt your family relationships because of a) your mood changes, and b) lack of family time because you have to sleep when other family members are awake.

Shift work is a part of our work world. Some workplaces, such as healthcare, have no choice but to work 24 hours a day.

The service industry has extended hours. Production during peak times, in occupations such as farming or construction, may require longer shifts or round-the-clock operations.

What can I do?

In cooperation with your employer, there are many things you can do to reduce the negative effects of shift work:

- Learn strategies to remain alert on-the-job.
- Understand how to minimize the effects of shift work.
- Have regular wake and rest routines.
- Avoid exercise for two hours before going to bed.
- Protect your sleep periods (ensure a quiet sleeping area and disconnect the phone).
- Eat nutritious meals, keep a regular meal routine.
- Keep physically fit.

By doing these things, you're helping regulate your body's daily rhythm. Your employer can help minimize the bad effects of shift work by the way s/he organizes and schedules work, and designs the workplace.

The negative effects of shift work will be reduced when:

- the sequence of shift is arranged in order of day-evening-night rather than night-evening-day
- the duties are rearranged to reduce the need for shift work
- the work during shifts is varied to reduce boredom
- workers have some input into the development of shift work schedules
- some free weekends each month are included
- day shifts start after 5 a.m.
- workers aren't isolated, that is they work near each other, and
- a food preparation and rest area is provided

Supports on-the-job

Who can help me when I'm having problems at work?

All workers encounter problems at work. Problem solving of all types is a normal part of everyday work. In fact, some employers specifically look for employees who have strong problem-solving skills.

Two kinds of problems stand out:

- those that are part of your assigned work
- problems in working relationships with others

Problems in your working relationships with other employees will likely challenge you more than your work task problems. Your coworkers and supervisor can give you support and advice on both kinds of problems. There may be times, however, when you need the help of someone whose job is to counsel people trying to work out problems in their work relationships.

Many larger companies have an Employee Assistance Program (EAP) with trained counselors. You can talk to them about problems in the work environment or problems in your personal life that are affecting your work.

What groups can I join for support at work?

Many medium sized and larger companies have social clubs that organize parties and sports events. Joining the committees that organize events and participating in the events will bring you benefits. These informal activities connect you with people who become part of your ‘workplace support group.’

More professional groups also form and come together in workplaces.

There may be special support groups for persons with:

- similar interests, such as employment equity, professional development or occupational health and safety
- distinguishing characteristics, such as visible minorities and persons having Aboriginal status

Participating in these kinds of groups will expand your identity and give you a sense of fitting into a particular workplace. Your boss will see you as someone who contributes to the workplace and the well being of others.

Self-check

Ask yourself what you have done to participate in group tasks in the workplace and other situations. Make a list of all the groups you know exist in the workplace. Check off the ones you belong to. Is there another one that might interest you? If you aren't participating in any group, check off one you'd like to try out, and start the process next week.

Getting along

Why is teamwork so important?

More and more today people work on teams. On teams you get ahead and succeed by helping the other workers succeed. Helping, cooperating, sharing the load, doing what's best for the team – that's the essence of teamwork. Learning good teamwork skills can take time. To be part of a team, try doing these things:

- put the team ahead of your individual needs
- stay positive and constructive
- show interest in your coworkers
- treat your coworkers with consideration and respect
- ask for their ideas and really listen when they're giving them

- meet people half way in deciding what to do (cooperate and compromise)
- do what your supervisor asks you to do
- ask for help and ask questions you need answered
- work without being asked
- do your fair share of the work
- respect time limits for breaks
- arrive a little early, leave on time
- help your coworkers and new workers
- praise your coworkers for their successes
- use problem solving to benefit everyone
- disagree politely (always be polite at work)

What if I have problems with another worker or my supervisor?

You will have problems with someone in the workplace at some time. Problems can range from simple disagreements and conflicts to more serious concerns like harassment, discrimination or theft.

Most small problems can be solved by communicating the concern to the other party and jointly deciding on a solution.

Other problems, such as conflict with a co-worker/supervisor, may need more work to solve.

Whether you decide to act and do something may depend on:

- importance of the relationship
- level of your stress
- amount of difficulty it's creating for your work.

Once you've decided to address the conflict or disagreement, you need a strategy. If you meet with the person you're in conflict with, it will help if you know what you're going to say. Take some time to put your thoughts and feelings in order, so you can communicate the problem in a calm, rational way.

Answer these questions first:

- What do I see as the real problem?
- How do I feel about the problem?
- What change do I want to happen?
- What are some things I can do to solve the problem?
- What can I say to the person I'm having the problem with?

Use these questions as a basis for your problem solving with the other person. Remember, if you want to resolve the conflict, you have to take action. Taking action is no guarantee that the situation will improve, but you'll have the satisfaction of knowing you tried.

Evaluation on-the-job

How will I know how well I'm doing on a job?

When you're starting a job or you're new to the world of work, you will probably feel unsure of yourself. You may regularly find yourself asking: "Am I doing O.K.? Is this work good enough?" If you aren't asking these questions, perhaps it would be helpful to do so.

Your employer and supervisor should take the time to look at your work and let you know how you're doing. If you're not making any major, costly blunders, you may not get the attention you need from your supervisor to really know how you're doing in your work. Your supervisor may be busy with many other things s/he has to deal with on a daily basis. What to do?

You may want to ask for feedback about your work. You may be able to get some idea from your coworkers, and that should help you improve the work skills or techniques you need to do your job well.

You can ask your supervisor if s/he can meet with you at a particular time during the day or week.

At that meeting, you can:

- ask about the overall quality of your work
- get feedback from your supervisor, and
- ask any other questions that you have about the work environment, further training, informal work policies

In a busy workplace, it may be up to you to ask for the feedback and direction you need to do your job better. Think of it as your investment in safety and skill development. It also shows your boss that you are trying to do the best you can.

When and how will I be evaluated?

Companies that see staff performance and development as very important will have a process of evaluation they use with each employee. Ideally, it will include:

- informal feedback
- a probationary evaluation
- yearly evaluations

Evaluations will be based on your performance. Your employer will take different measures of it depending on the type of work you're doing.

Some of the common ways of evaluating include:

- observing your work (or talking to someone who has observed it)
- checking the product you are producing
- filling-out a checklist or rating form
- asking customers for feedback
- having a discussion with you about your work
- having a group discussion where each person's work is discussed

The rating form will probably include things such as:

- attendance and punctuality
- dependability
- responsibility
- communication skills
- attitude
- ability to get along with others
- productivity



Getting ahead

How can I improve myself at work?

Improving yourself at work has a lot to do with the attitude you have toward learning. If you're open to new ideas about how to do things, and actively look for them, you will improve both your work performance and your work skills.

Many workers learn how to do something one way, stick to it forever, and complain if they ever have to change it. This doesn't mean that you should change the way you do things every week, but you should look for ways to do your job more effectively and efficiently.

Observing your coworkers and supervisor, and asking them for their ideas and suggestions on how to do things, is an easy way to improve yourself.

If you finish your work, you may volunteer to help someone doing a different kind of job task. That will give you the opportunity to learn something new. Being flexible and willing to change is very important on any job.

Is training available to improve my skills?

Most employers provide ongoing training to help workers:

- do their work
- adjust to new technology and other changes in the work, and
- learn the skills they need to remain safe on the work site

Take advantage of all training that is available. Show an interest in improving your skills. Your employer may help you pay the costs of further training if it will benefit the company.

Can I apply for other jobs?

You can always apply for other jobs. Even though you might not feel fully qualified to do the other job, the person doing the hiring may see that you have the basic aptitude to learn the job duties. No one can be expected to know exactly how to do a job before they spend some time learning the specific job tasks and the work routine.

You never know who else is going to apply. You may be better qualified than the next person. At the very least you'll get some more experience learning about a new job and preparing for the interview if you are invited to one.

Should I let my current employer know if I apply for a different job?

If you apply for another job, make sure you advise your employer if you want him/her to give you a reference. An alternative is to let your employer know, if you're invited to an interview for another job. It's a common courtesy to let your employer know when you're doing something that will affect the staffing of the business. If you let him/her know, s/he may be able to adjust your current job to better meet your needs

Can I get promoted?

Yes. Even if you haven't worked for a company very long, getting promoted may depend on who's available to fill the position. If a supervisor or manager leaves unexpectedly, and no one else more skilled than you is around, you may be asked to do the job if your employer thinks you have the ability to learn it. Or, if you believe that you can do it, let your employer know. Help your employer know you as an able worker who wants to get ahead.

Doing your work well, getting along with others, showing an interest in the success of the company – all of these things will help your boss recognize you as someone with potential. They will help you get promoted. It won't hurt to mention to your boss your interest in improving yourself and moving into a position with more responsibility in the future. Help your boss keep you in mind.

How can I make myself more valuable to the employer I'm working for?

You can make yourself more valuable by:

- showing an interest in the operation of the business
- taking the initiative to learn new things
- taking the training that's offered and using it
- learning about other jobs in the company
- looking for ways that your job or other jobs could be done more effectively
- contributing at staff meetings
- getting involved in committees, such as the Occupational Health Committee
- volunteering for jobs your employer wants done
- showing concern for other workers and helping them when they're having difficulties
- showing a positive attitude toward others

In short, acting to make the work environment function better will go a long way to help you be seen as a valuable employee.



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The Job Cycle

Time off work

What do I need to know about time off work?

Can I be fired?

If you're guilty of serious misconduct, your employer can force you to resign or fire you. This 'firing' is referred to as a 'discharge', and your employer must have a good reason to do it. This is sometimes referred to as having 'just cause' to fire someone.

An employer who is aware that an employee is having problems in the workplace should try to help that employee deal with the problems. The employer should encourage the employee to improve and warn him/her of the possible consequences of the poor behaviour. This process is often referred to as 'progressive discipline'.

What's lay-off?

A lay-off happens when your employer terminates your employment temporarily, and for longer than six scheduled working days in a row.

Do I get any advance notice when I'm laid off?

If you've worked for your employer for three months or more, s/he must give you written notice.

The amount of the notice depends on how long you've been working for that employer. For example, if you've been working three months to a year, your employer must give you at least one week's notice. If you've been working one to three years, your employer must give you at least two weeks notice.

If you are in a union, you should check your collective agreement and/or see your 'shop steward' or 'union rep.'

What does 'pay in lieu' of notice mean?

Your employer must give you written notice of lay-off or discharge before it happens. If s/he doesn't, s/he must 'pay you in lieu' of notice.

Your employer must pay your wages for the notice period you're entitled to, for example, one week if you've worked between three months and a year.

What am I entitled to when I leave a job?

No matter how you leave a job, within 14 days of leaving your employer must pay you:

- all wages s/he owes you
- all holiday pay s/he owes you, and
- any pay in lieu of notice (if required)

As you will see in the next section, there are other things you might ask from an employer, especially if you're on good terms.

How much notice should I give an employer when I leave a job?

There's no requirement for such notice under *The Labour Standards Act*. Any notice an employee provides is a courtesy. However, you may want to give the same notice your employer has to give you.

You may give your employer more or less notice depending on:

- your need to leave the job by a certain time
- your relationship with your employer
- how difficult it will be for your employer to replace you

Be clear about your intention to leave. Give your employer a letter, typed or in your own handwriting, and signed that states your intention to leave. A sample letter is included in this guide.

What's a leave of absence?

If you want to take time off work, you can ask for a 'temporary leave of absence', sometimes called a TLA.

Many companies have informal or written policies about leaves of absence, and some kinds of leaves, such as maternity leave, are required by law. You'll get paid for some leaves, and not others.

Some common types of leave are:

- educational leave
- maternity, adoption or parental leave
- stress leave

Whether or not your employer agrees to your request for leave will depend on:

- the company's policy about leaves of absence
- your reasons for wanting a leave
- whether the type of leave you're asking for is required by law
- whether your leave will benefit the company in the future, as it might in educational leave
- the length of the leave requested and how it will affect work in the company
- how easy it will be to find someone else to do your job
- the length of time you've been working at the company

Getting a leave of absence is a cooperative arrangement between you and your employer that meets your needs and may also benefit your employer.

What if I have a new child or I'm pregnant?

There are three kinds of leave you can take if you have a new child.

Your employer will give you unpaid leave if you're:

- pregnant (maternity leave)
- adopting a child (with adoption, only the primary caregiver can take the leave)
- a parent (either parent or both parents may take this leave)

Leave for maternity or adoption is 18 weeks. Parental leave is 34 weeks for the birth mother or primary caregiver and 37 weeks for the birth father or spouse of the primary caregiver.

You qualify for these leaves if you:

- are a full-time or a part-time employee
- are employed at the time, and
- have been working for at least 20 weeks in the 52 weeks before the day the leave begins

You must ask for maternity, adoption or parental leave in writing four weeks in advance. Similarly, when you want to return to work, you must let your employer know in writing, at least four weeks in advance, that you will be going back to work.

Recent changes in Employment Insurance (EI) provide benefits for up to one year. This means you may qualify for EI benefits for up to one year.

Can I be fired if I'm pregnant?

No. Your employer can't fire you, lay you off, or discriminate against you because you:

- are pregnant,
- are temporarily disabled due to pregnancy, or
- have applied for maternity leave.

Sexual discrimination under *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* and *The Occupational Health and Safety Act (1993)* is illegal.

Do I get any financial support if I'm pregnant?

Your employer will not pay your wages, but you may be eligible for Employment Insurance benefits. To find out, contact the nearest federal government office of Human Resources Development Canada.

If your employer offers sick or disability benefits to the other employees, you're also eligible for them. If you are pregnant and unable to work due to pregnancy or illness related to your pregnancy, you can receive sick leave benefits and/or disability benefits. You also qualify for these benefits while pregnant if you're sick or disabled for reasons that are not related to your pregnancy.

While you're on leave for pregnancy, adoption or parental leave, you can continue to participate in your company's benefit plans. Your employer may require you to contribute to the plan to maintain the benefits. For example, you may have to pay something each month to maintain your health and dental plan or your long-term disability plan. If you were working, this contribution would be deducted from your paycheck.

What's an exit interview?

Having an 'exit interview' with your employer when you leave a job can be a productive experience for both of you. You may have to request an exit interview. It could include:

- a review of what you did while you were working on that job
- the things you learned
- the positive experiences you had while working
- the challenges you faced and dealt with
- future prospects with the company if that interests you, and
- discussion of a 'letter of reference' if you're leaving the company on good terms'

The exit interview provides a final opportunity to ask for feedback on your performance as a worker and for you to express your thanks for the opportunity to work. Doing this officially will show your employer that you valued the work opportunity. S/he will be left with a good impression of you.

Benefits (to hold onto)

What can I keep?

What's seniority? Can I take it with me?

Seniority refers to the number of days you've worked for an employer who has a seniority policy. Each employee has a certain level of seniority.

Employers in unionized workplaces commonly use seniority in the hiring and promotion of workers who apply for other jobs. If two workers have equal qualifications to do the job, the worker with more seniority, that is with more time with the company, will get the job if the collective agreement agrees with the procedure.

You can usually take your seniority with you if you stay in the same company or system. In a unionized workplace, check your collective agreement to see what it states about seniority.

Do I lose my pension money if I leave a job?

No. It's very unlikely that you will lose your pension money if you leave an employer. Every pension plan is different, however, so your access to the money in the pension plan can vary. Some likely possibilities:

- You can transfer the money to another pension plan

- You can't take the money out until a time set by your pension plan

Check with the human resource officer at your workplace or with those who run the pension plan to find out your options.

What records are important?

Do I need to keep a record of what I learned on each job?

It's to your advantage to keep a written record. Don't ignore this critical step when you finish a job.

Why? Well, when you apply for your next job, in the interview you'll be able to talk in an informed way about the skills and other things you learned on your previous job. You'll impress your next employer, and s/he'll see your potential as an employee who learns on-the-job and values that opportunity to learn.

You'll also need to describe your new skills on application forms and when bringing your resume up-to-date. Making a written record of what you learn will make these tasks much easier.

Do I need to keep a record of the time I've worked on a job?

When you finish a job, your employer should give you a 'record of employment form' that indicates

the dates you started and finished employment with that company (and how much you earned).

You'll have to submit this form if you apply for Employment Insurance (EI). If your employer doesn't give you your record of employment, ask for it!

It may help you remember your employment dates if you ask your employer for a letter showing your dates of employment. This can be part of your personal record of employment. You can use it to update your resume and show it to future employers who want proof of your work history.

Will my employer send me something to help me fill in my income tax form?

It is your employer's responsibility to mail or give you your official T-4 slip. It shows the total wages you earned over the last calendar year and the money deducted from your earnings. Deductions from your paycheck include taxes, your Canada Pension Plan (CPP) contributions and Employment Insurance (EI). The law requires these deductions.

Use your T-4 slip(s) to fill-out your income tax return. Keep a copy of the slip(s) for your own records; send in the originals with your return. If you paid more tax than you should have while you were working, you'll get a refund; if you paid less, you'll have to make up the difference between what you paid and what you needed to pay.

Don't forget

Your employer is obligated to mail or give you your T-4 by February 28th. If you've moved, however, and your past employer doesn't have your address, you may not receive your T-4.

It's up to you to let your past employers know your current address. You can also contact your past employer and agree to pick up your T-4.

If you don't receive a T-4 as you should, you can submit your pay stubs to Canada Customs and Revenue Agency when you file your income tax return. Your pay stub (pay statement) shows your earnings and deductions for each pay period. This is a good reason to hold on to all your pay stubs.

Generally, your income tax return has to be filed on or before April 30th of each year.

What's a letter of reference? How do I get one?

If you leave on good terms with the employer, ask your boss or supervisor for a letter of reference before you leave a job. That means you'll have it when you leave and start applying for your next job. You can attach it to your resume.

An employer may ask you what you want in your letter of reference. You may suggest the following:

- dates you worked for the company
- your status as a full-time or part-time worker
- what you did, that is your duties and responsibilities
- the skills you learned and demonstrated
- a comment on the quality of your work
- whether or not the employer would recommend you for another job

Of course, you probably wouldn't use an employer as a reference if s/he wouldn't give you a positive recommendation.

Leaving a job

What happens if I leave because of illness or injury?

If you leave because of illness or injury, you'll be able to use the following to cover your living costs:

- Employment Insurance (EI)
- accumulated sick leave benefit in the short-term
- short-term disability benefits if your employment situation offers those benefits, and
- long term disability benefits or WCB benefits in the long-term

If I think I wasn't paid all the money I earned, what can I do?

Talk to your employer to see if you can work it out. If you can't, you should file a complaint with Labour Standards for unpaid wages.

Your complaint should be filed within one year of the time the wages were due. Labour Standards can only recover wages that should have been paid to you the year before the complaint was filed or during your last year of employment with that employer. You may be able to collect unpaid wages after one year, but you may have to go to court to do it.

If you have a complaint about any financial matter
– unpaid wages, holiday pay, annual vacation pay
– contact Labour Standards. You can also contact Labour Standards if you have a complaint about your dismissal.

If I think I was unfairly dismissed, what can I do?

You have the right to fair and equal treatment in the workplace, and that applies to dismissals.

If you think you were dismissed over one of the areas protected by *The Saskatchewan Human Rights Code* – age, creed or religion, family or marital status, nationality, ancestry or place of origin, physical or mental disability, race or colour, receipt of public assistance, sex or sexual orientation
– you have a right to file a complaint with the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission (SHRC).

Occupational Health and Safety legislation protects you from being fired for refusing to do what you believed was unusually dangerous work. However, you must have grounds for your belief and follow the proper steps, including:

1. Informing your supervisor of your refusal, and telling him/her that your refusal is because of a health and safety concern.

2. If you can't resolve the concern with your supervisor, then the Occupational Health Committee must be involved and investigate the refusal.
3. You should remain on the work site during a refusal unless your employer tells you to leave.
4. Your supervisor has the right to assign you other work.
5. You may continue in your refusal until you are satisfied that the job is no longer unusually dangerous or until an officer from the Occupational Health and Safety Division makes a decision.

What if someone makes a complaint against me?

Employees have the right to file a complaint against you (a worker) if they think that you discriminated against them at work for any of the reasons listed above. The SHRC may look into the matter even if you've left your place of employment.

If the SHRC accepts the complaint, you'll receive a copy of the complaint, plus an opportunity to present your point of view.

Employment Insurance (EI)

What's EI? Can I receive it?

Employment Insurance (EI) is a temporary financial safety net to protect Canadians from hardship when they lose their jobs and while they are looking for work. You must meet certain conditions to qualify for EI – contact Service Canada for details.

The Federal Government pays regular benefits to qualified people who are available for work and able to work, but who can't find a job.

Let's assume that you lost your job and you're looking for work. To receive EI you must:

- apply for it
- have paid into the EI while working
- have been without work and without pay for at least seven days in a row, and
- have worked the required number of hours

How long do I have to work to be eligible for benefits?

In most cases you must have worked a minimum of 420 to 700 hours.

If you're in the work force for the first time, you'll need more hours. Most likely you'll need 910 hours of work in the last 52 weeks during which you made EI contributions.

If you're applying for sickness, maternity or parental benefits, you'll need 700 hours of work.

Please note that the regulations often change. You should consult EI for the latest information.

How much and how long are EI benefits?

Your basic benefit rate is usually 55% of your average weekly-insured earnings. There are some exceptions.

You can receive EI benefits from 14 to 45 weeks.

What are my responsibilities while I'm on EI?

While receiving EI, you must:

- be willing and able to work
- be looking for work
- follow instructions from EI staff

- accurately report all money earned while on EI
- report all work you do while on EI even if you haven't yet been paid
- report any absence from your area of residence, and
- report any absence from Canada

Where and how can I apply?

You need to fill-in an EI application form, available at any EI office. You will need to bring:

- your social insurance number (SIN), and
- your record of employment (ROE) issued by your employer(s)



Agencies to contact

Community Resources & Employment Employment Centres

Regina	(306) 787-2160
Saskatoon	(306) 933-6281
Biggar	(306) 948-3586
Creighton	(306) 688-8826
Estevan	(306) 637-3820
Fort Qu'Appelle	(306) 332-3404
Humboldt	(306) 682-6772
Ile a La Crosse	(306) 833-3235
La Ronge	(306) 425-4520
Lloydminster	(306) 825-6418
Meadow Lake	(306) 236-7538
Melfort	(306) 752-6243
Moose Jaw	(306) 694-3699
Nipawin	(306) 862-1840
North Battleford	(306) 446-8705
Prince Albert	(306) 953-2488
Swift Current	(306) 778-8230
Weyburn	(306) 848-2568
Wynyard	(306) 554-2231
Yorkton	(306) 786-1354

Service Canada
(includes EI and SIN inquiries)

Toll free for Saskatchewan 1-800-206-7218

*Saskatchewan Apprenticeship and Trade
Certification Commission*

Regina	(306) 787-2444
Toll Free	1-877-363-0536
Saskatoon	(306) 933-8476
Toll Free	1-800-667-4380
Estevan	(306) 637-4930
La Ronge	(306) 425-4385
Lloydminster	(306) 825-6418
Moose Jaw	(306) 694-3127
North Battleford	(306) 446-7434
Prince Albert	(306) 953-2717
Swift Current	(306) 778-8945
Yorkton	(306) 786-1394

*Programs supporting young persons interested
in entrepreneurship*

Aboriginal Business Canada
1-800-662-6232

Young Entrepreneur Financing Program
1-800-661-3811

International Trade Personnel Program
1-888-338-9378

*Agencies involved in economic and
business development*

Canadian Federation of
Independent Business (CFIB)
(306) 757-0000; 1-800-992-2342

Saskatchewan Chamber of Commerce
(306) 352-2671

Saskatchewan Industry
and Resources
(306) 787-2232

Canada-Saskatchewan
Business Service Centre
1-800-667-4374

For information about unions

Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)
Regina Office (306) 525-6137

Saskatchewan Federation of Labour (SFL)
(306) 525-0197

Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission

Saskatoon Office (306) 933-5952
Regina Office (306) 787-2530
Toll Free 1-800-667-8577

Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board

Regina (headquarters) (306) 787-4370
Toll Free 1-800-667-7590
Saskatoon (branch office) (306) 933-6312

Alcohol and Drug Services

Contact your local Health District Office

Canada Revenue Agency

Individual Income Tax Inquiries
1-800-959-8281
Teletypewriter (TTY) Enquiry Service
1-800-665-0354



My Profile



Vision statement

When taking your first steps in the world of work, it helps to look forward and imagine the future you want. Ask yourself what you want to be doing in five or 10 years.

Take this opportunity to express your hopes and dreams about the goals you may reach, as the simple wishes of the present have the potential to be your future.

Sample vision statement: “I’ve always wanted to be an occupational therapist. My body is strong, and I’ve always enjoyed doing physical things like sports. I’d like to help people who are recovering from injury or illness.”

Write down your personal vision statement after you’ve thought about what you’d like your future to hold.

How I see my future....



Answering the following questions will help you in an interview. Your answers will also form the basis of your resume.

- What are my best personal qualities?
- What do others say about me as a person?
- What kind of work tasks do I do well?
- What have others said about my work in school, at home, or elsewhere?
- What skills can I offer an employer (based on what you do well). Don't forget computer skills, keyboarding, languages, CPR, first aid, etc.
- What kind of work do I like doing?
 - working with people
 - working with numbers and information
 - working with things/objects

Jobs that appeal to me:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

My work experiences (paid or volunteer) in order, starting with the most recent:

Position: _____

Company/Organization: _____

Address: _____

Supervisor: _____ Phone: _____

Pay Rate: _____

Start Date: End Date: _____

Duties: _____

Position: _____

Company/Organization: _____

Address: _____

Supervisor: _____ Phone: _____

Pay Rate: _____

Start Date: End Date: _____

Duties: _____

Position: _____

Company/Organization: _____

Address: _____

Supervisor: _____ Phone: _____

Pay Rate: _____

Start Date: End Date: _____

Duties: _____

Position: _____

Company/Organization: _____

Address: _____

Supervisor: _____ Phone: _____

Pay Rate: _____

Start Date: End Date: _____

Duties: _____

Position: _____

Company/Organization: _____

Address: _____

Supervisor: _____ Phone: _____

Pay Rate: _____

Start Date: End Date: _____

Duties: _____

My education and training:

List your education and any training, starting with your most recent course or program.

Include schooling, short courses and any other training you've taken.

Course/Program Taken: _____

School/Training Institute: _____

Date Completed: _____

Course/Program Taken: _____

School/Training Institute: _____

Date Completed: _____

Course/Program Taken: _____

School/Training Institute: _____

Date Completed: _____

Course/Program Taken: _____

School/Training Institute: _____

Date Completed: _____

Course/Program Taken: _____

School/Training Institute: _____

Date Completed: _____

My references:

Name: _____

Position: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Name: _____

Position: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Name: _____

Position: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Name: _____

Position: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____

Telephone Number: _____



*Making progress
(during the job):*

Current Work Schedule

Shift	Day	Evening	Night	Other
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

Work Schedule Worksheet

Shift	Day	Evening	Night	Other
Monday				
Tuesday				
Wednesday				
Thursday				
Friday				
Saturday				
Sunday				

How I rate myself on these positive employee qualities

◆ **Punctual (on time)**

Excellent ___ O.K. ___ Need to improve ___

How? _____

◆ **Dependable/reliable**

Excellent ___ O.K. ___ Need to improve ___

How? _____

◆ **Cooperative**

Excellent ___ O.K. ___ Need to improve ___

How? _____

◆ **Get along well with others**

Excellent ___ O.K. ___ Need to improve ___

How? _____

◆ **Helpful**

Excellent ___ O.K. ___ Need to improve ___

How? _____

◆ **Take initiative**

Excellent ___ O.K. ___ Need to improve ___

How? _____

◆ **Able to work independently**

Excellent ___ O.K. ___ Need to improve ___

How? _____

◆ **Responsible**

Excellent ___ O.K. ___ Need to improve ___

How? _____

◆ **Conscientious**

Excellent ___ O.K. ___ Need to improve ___

How? _____

◆ **Communicate well with others**

Excellent ___ O.K. ___ Need to improve ___

How? _____

◆ **Positive/enthusiastic**

Excellent ___ O.K. ___ Need to improve ___

How? _____

◆ **Loyal/trustworthy**

Excellent ___ O.K. ___ Need to improve ___

How? _____

◆ **Flexible/adaptable**

Excellent ___ O.K. ___ Need to improve ___

How? _____

◆ **Look after work environment**

Excellent ___ O.K. ___ Need to improve ___

How? _____

◆ **Take directions well**

Excellent ___ O.K. ___ Need to improve ___

How? _____

Training I've taken on the job

Training that would be good for me to take

***Things I learned (new skills) on my last job:
“I can ...”***

Your next employer may expect you to talk about what you learned on a previous job.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

Sample letter advising my employer I'll be leaving

(date)

Dear _____ (name of employer)

This is to let you know that I will be resigning from my job on _____ (date).

Thank you for the opportunity to work for _____ (name of company) as a _____ (name of job).

Yours truly,

(my signature)

(my name in print or typed)

You may want to add the following in your letter:

I would like to discuss with you before I leave:

- a letter of reference
- the possibility of part-time work during the school year
- what I was able to learn and do while I was employed here (exit interview)



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- Saskatchewan Learning
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- Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission
- Saskatchewan Workers' Compensation Board



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