The jobs you hold during your working life represent your unique work history. One person’s work history may be a movement from job to job within the same occupation. Another person’s work history may include one or more changes to entirely different occupations and jobs. A third person’s work history may have no orderly pattern at all. Some people are unable to establish a successful work history.

“No man needs sympathy because he has to work. Far and away the best prize that life offers is the chance to work hard at work worth doing.”

Theodore Roosevelt
Marcy had finished her junior year in high school and started to look for a summer job. She went to the Job Service office. Little was available for students like her. Most of the job openings were permanent positions for people 18 and over. Marcy was only 17 and could not take a permanent job.

One job was available. It was offered by someone who wanted a person to mow grass and do yard work one day a week. She took the job.

When Marcy showed up at the Porters’ house, Mrs. Porter showed her what to do. For the rest of the day she mowed, raked, pruned, trimmed, and pulled weeds. The lawn and garden were beautiful and Marcy took pride in making them even more attractive. After she finished, she cleaned the mower, put away the tools, and swept the walk and driveway. Mrs. Porter thanked her and paid her.

Marcy returned a week later and did a really good job. When Mrs. Porter paid her this time, she complimented Marcy and gave her a bonus. Mrs. Porter said that it was very difficult to find people willing and able to do good work. Mrs. Porter asked Marcy if she would be interested in doing yard work for some of her neighbors.

Before long Marcy had all the jobs she was able to do. She learned that quality effort pays off. Because her work was appreciated, Marcy was able to use Mrs. Porter’s name as a reference for later jobs. Mrs. Porter was a well-respected member of the community. Her recommendations helped Marcy many times in later years.

SUCCESS TIP
If you show that you are willing and able to do good work, your work will get noticed!

THINK CRITICALLY

1. What are some things that Marcy did that Mrs. Porter considered good work?
2. Why do you think Marcy had all the jobs she could do?
A work history is all of the jobs that one holds during the course of a working lifetime. The four work histories that follow illustrate how jobs can serve different purposes at different times in one’s life. Jobs are often used as a way to achieve something else. One purpose may be to learn occupational skills. Another purpose may be to earn money for college. Some jobs are used to gain experience in order to qualify, or meet the preliminary requirements, for a better job. For most people, first jobs are only steppingstones to later ones.

Knowing about different work histories can help you think about and plan for your own career. Let’s examine the work histories of four different people.

**Example 1—Terry**
Terry got a job in a small electronics sales and repair shop as part of a co-op program. After he graduated from high school, he took a full-time job in the electronics department of a large discount store. He often did small repair jobs for friends and neighbors during evenings and weekends.

Next, he got a job repairing televisions and installing antennas. He took this job in order to save enough money to open his own business. Terry now has a stable job as owner-manager of an electronics supply firm.
Example 2—Marie
When Marie graduated from high school, she did not know what she wanted to do. After being out of work for several months, she found a full-time job. It was working as a salesclerk in a fashionable clothing store. From working in the store, Marie discovered that she enjoyed retail selling and had a talent for it.

After two years, she quit her job and enrolled in college to major in marketing. During college, Marie had a part-time job in a clothing store in the campus town. After she finished a marketing degree, she took a job as a sales manager for a national department store. She worked at that job for five years before staying at home for two years with young children. Marie just started working again at a job that is similar to the one she left earlier.

Example 3—Cindy
Cindy was an outstanding athlete who never worked while attending high school or college. After college, her first job turned out to be a stable one. It was as a high school teacher and coach. After six years, however, she had a desire to do something else.

A friend in the sporting goods business offered Cindy a job. She was not sure whether she would like it, but she quit her teaching job to give it a try. Somewhat to her surprise, Cindy enjoyed the challenge of the job. After a year in the job, she took another job with a large sporting goods manufacturer. She is now in charge of its school athletic sales. Cindy plans to make this a stable job.

Example 4—Rick
Rick never liked school and could not wait to get out. After high school, he got a job stocking shelves in a grocery store. He worked for a couple of months before getting into an argument with the store manager. Rick was fired.

His next job was working evenings and weekends as a service station attendant. After working at that job for about a year, Rick decided that he should learn a skill. Rick then moved to another town and got an apartment with a friend. He enrolled in a technical school to learn computer programming. He had heard this was a growing field.

First jobs are often used to learn occupational skills.

While going to school, Rick took a part-time job at another service station. He quit school after six months because he had to study too hard. Now Rick has another job driving a delivery truck while he decides whether to join the Armed Forces or start his own business!

LESSON 2.1 REVIEW

1. What are some reasons why people are unable to establish a successful work history?

2. Give an example to show how knowledge of work histories can help you think about and plan a career.
Different work histories can lead to a stable job. You read how Terry, Marie, and Cindy followed different paths to a stable job. One route is not necessarily better than another. Some work histories like Rick’s, however, only lead to detours and dead ends.

A **stable job** is one that you consider to be permanent and that may last several years. This does not mean, however, that you stay in the job forever. Remember Cindy’s example. You may have a stable job at any time in your work life. Following are additional characteristics of stable jobs. Being aware of them can help you gain greater control over your work history.

**Self-direction**

Gaining a stable job does not usually happen by accident. Most successful careers come from hard work and **self-direction**, which means setting goals and taking steps to get there. Part of being self-directed is developing your skills through education or training.

Once you get a job, you want to keep it. This means performing well on the job tasks you are being paid to do. It also means learning and growing on the job. Much of this involves keeping up to date with what is going on in your field.

Advancing in a job usually requires doing more than your share. To become eligible for **promotion**, or advancement to a higher-level job or position, you may also need to get more education or training. Sometimes, advancing in a career involves taking risks. A willingness to take a risk, though, often leads to greater personal and career success.

**Effort Pays Off**

Not enough jobs are available for everyone who wants one. This is especially true for young people. If you want to work, you may have to accept any job that you can get. It may be low...
Suppose you had two job offers. The first job is a short-term job, planned to last for six weeks. This job would pay $12 an hour, and you would work for 35 hours a week. The second job is a regular, long-term job, which would pay $10 an hour. You would work 40 hours a week. Which job would pay you more per week?

**SOLUTION**

To calculate your earnings, use this formula: Earnings per week = pay per hour \times hours worked in a week

Job 1: Earnings per week = $12 \times 35 = $420

Job 2: Earnings per week = $10 \times 40 = $400

The first job would pay you more per week. However, this is not a stable job.

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**STABLE JOBS ADAPT TO CHANGE**

The world of work is continually changing. Some industries and occupations become obsolete, or no longer used, as new ones are created. For example, the number of telephone operators has steadily decreased because of new electronic switching equipment. This technology, however, has created a need for new types of workers who can install and maintain such equipment. During your work life, you will probably have to adjust to great changes due to technology, which is the application of scientific knowledge to practical uses.

People who are more successful are generally those who anticipate and adapt to change. Eva and Mario are a good example. Eva and Mario own a typing and printing service. Most of their clients are small business owners and college students.

A few years ago, they began to get requests for desktop publishing. They had to decline the business. To meet the needs of the clients, they purchased desktop publishing software, a scanner, and a color laser printer. Mario, Eva, and the office staff took extra time to learn how to use the new software and equipment. They are glad they did. They now have more business and have been able to pay for the new equipment with the increased earnings.

Part of your preparation for a career should include planning for change. Try to develop the skills you will need in tomorrow’s workplace.

**LESSON 2.2 REVIEW**

1. Name three reasons why a person might voluntarily leave a stable job.
2. Jobs can serve different purposes at different times in our lives. Give three examples.
3. Give an example to show how taking a risk can lead to greater success in a career.
4. How can technological change influence a career? Give one positive and one negative example.
The growth of the Internet, the expansion of uses for the World Wide Web, and the need for user support have stepped up the demand for information technology workers. Database administrators work with database management systems software and determine ways to organize and store data. They set up computer databases and test and coordinate changes to them. Computer support specialists provide technical assistance, support, and advice to users. This group includes technical support specialists, help desk technicians, and customer service representatives. These troubleshooters answer phone calls, use automated diagnostic programs, and resolve recurrent problems. Support specialists may work within an organization or directly for a computer or software vendor as more of this type of work is outsourced, or sent outside the company.

Other information technology workers are involved in analysis, maintenance, or design of a particular system or system part. Network or computer systems administrators, for example, design, install, and support an organization’s networks, including its intranet, a private network that typically includes Internet access. They maintain network hardware and software, analyze problems, and monitor the network to ensure availability to system users. Administrators also may plan, coordinate, and implement network security measures. In some organizations, computer security specialists may plan, coordinate, and implement information security.

A variety of information technology occupations relate to design, development, and maintenance of web sites and servers. For example, webmasters are responsible for all technical aspects of a web site. This includes performance issues such as speed of access and approval of web site content. Web developers, also called web designers, are responsible for site design and creation. The 21st century will see continued rapid growth of electronic commerce, or conducting business online. This translates into an increasing demand for information technology workers who can help organizations use technology to communicate with employees, clients, and consumers.
SOME YOUNG PEOPLE REGARD SCHOOL AS SOME-THING TO GET THROUGH SO THEY CAN BE FREE TO DO WHAT THEY WANT. WHAT IS THE PROBLEM WITH THIS ATTITUDE? WELL, SCHOOL IS A WORKPLACE, TOO. A PROSPECTIVE EMPLOYER WILL LOOK AT YOUR SCHOOL RECORD FOR CLUES AS TO WHAT KIND OF AN EMPLOYEE YOU MIGHT BE. A POOR SCHOOL RECORD IS HARD TO DEFEND. BLAMING TEACHERS OR SOMEONE ELSE FOR YOUR PROBLEMS WILL NOT IMPRESS ANYONE.

Perhaps you have done poorly in school thus far. What can you do now? You can always work harder during what is left of your high school career. A marked improvement in your attitude and performance will be helpful later. It will show teachers and employers that you have become a more mature person.

Now is the time to change habits and attitudes that may hold you back in the workplace. If, for example, you are frequently absent or late to school, make a greater effort to go to school and...
to be on time. Or, if you often commit careless errors in your schoolwork, take the time to reread or recheck your work before turning it in.

### SHAPING YOUR CAREER

Consider taking more courses that will strengthen your academic background. Most jobs require basic mathematics and communication skills. You may want to take more math or English. If you haven’t already, how about trying a computer course? Being familiar with computers is required in most jobs. Your work experience coordinator or school counselor may have other suggestions depending on your background and needs.

In Chapter 3, you will learn how to look for a job. You may discover that a job search can be frustrating. You may end up accepting a job that is less than what you had hoped for. If so, do not get discouraged. Remember what you have learned in this chapter about the different routes to a stable, satisfying job. How you begin your career is less important than getting it started. You can then use the beginning job as a steppingstone to something better.

Different occupations require different skills. To find out what skills are needed in your chosen occupation, interview some people who have the jobs you think you would like. Ask what skills they use every day. Do they make calculations? If so, you may want to make sure you take any necessary math classes to prepare yourself. Do they have to make sales presentations to others? If so, you may want to take a course in public speaking. Do they use computers? If so, find out what programs they use and make a point of taking classes to learn these programs. Preparing yourself for your career now will help you qualify for the jobs you want.

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**LESSON 2.3 THE FUTURE BEGINS NOW**

1. Why are employers usually interested in how well you have done in school?
2. Why is having a mature outlook important when it comes time to look for a job?
3. Think of an attitude you have that you need to change before you find work. What steps can you take to change it?
4. Name three things that you might begin to do now to influence your career.

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**NOTHING BUT NET**

The World Wide Web, or simply the Web is a network of millions of computers. These computers are called servers. Web servers store computer files (web pages) that contain all kinds of information, including images, sounds, and text. To access this information, you use browser software. When you key a web address such as http://www.thomson.com, or when you click on a link such as Thomson Corporation, your browser requests the page represented by the address or link from the server and displays it in its proper form.
You may apply for or be offered a job someday that requires you to work various shifts. The demand for round-the-clock shift workers has increased significantly in the last few decades. Millions of Americans now work the night shift, which usually means working from midnight to 8 a.m. This trend is expected to continue as more businesses stay open 24 hours.

Some employees work the swing shift—4 p.m. to midnight, for example—or the night shift on a permanent basis. Others are rotated frequently from shift to shift. Time shuffling can have its price, however. The health and productivity of shift workers may suffer. An upside-down schedule disturbs the body’s “inner clock.” This can cause fatigue and digestive problems. Rotating shift workers also make more mistakes than workers with set shifts. For example, between midnight and dawn nurses dispense wrong medication more often and truckers have more single-vehicle accidents than do workers with set shifts.

A new breed of scientists called chronobiologists is beginning to solve some of these problems. Most problems are related to the direction and rate of shift rotation. Rotation can be clockwise, which means going to work later at each change, or counterclockwise, which means going to work earlier. Shifts may change every day or two or every several weeks. It has been found that the body adjusts better to a clockwise rotation schedule; that is, rotating from the day shift to the swing shift to the night shift. At least three weeks should elapse between shift changes. Companies trying this pattern have found major improvement in production and fewer workers’ complaints about schedules.

**THINK CRITICALLY**

1. What are some companies in your area that might have shift work?

2. Are you surprised at the number of mistakes people make at work when they are tired? Why or why not?
Chapter 2

Chapter in Brief

Lesson 2.1 Work Histories
A. The jobs that you hold during your working life form a work history. People often have very different work histories. Knowing about work histories can help you think about and plan your own career.
B. A job can serve different purposes at different times in your life. Beginning jobs are often used to achieve something else, such as learning a skill, saving money for college, or qualifying for a better job.

Lesson 2.2 Moving Toward a Stable Job
A. A stable job is one that you consider to be permanent. It may last for several years. Many different routes can lead to a stable job. One route is not necessarily better than another.
B. There are other common characteristics of stable jobs. One is that most stable jobs result from hard work and self-direction. Another is that quality effort on a job usually pays off. A third characteristic is that people with successful, stable jobs are generally those who anticipate and adapt to change.

Lesson 2.3 The Future Begins Now
A. You can take steps now to influence the direction of your career. Work harder during what is left of your high school years.
B. Change habits and attitudes that may hold you back in the workplace. Consider taking additional courses to strengthen your academic background.

Activities
1. Ask a parent or other adult to list all the jobs he or she has held. Compare the work histories in class. What are the similarities and differences? Which types of work histories are the most common?
2. In doing Activity 1, did you note how work histories may be influenced by illnesses, accidents, economic hard times, wars, and so on? List as many factors as you can that are beyond one's control that may influence a career. Discuss your answers in class.
3. Write a list of three jobs you consider stable. Next to each, write why you think each of these jobs is stable.
4. Think about your own work habits and attitudes. Write down two or three things that need improving. We all have a few faults. Go over the list with your work experience coordinator. Discuss what you can do to improve your performance.
5. List some things you can do to help shape your future career.
**Word Power**

On a separate sheet of paper, match each definition with the correct term. All definitions will be used, and a definition will be used only once.

6. A job considered to be permanent; may last several years  
7. Meet the preliminary requirements for a job or position  
8. All of the jobs that one holds during the course of a working lifetime  
9. Outdated; no longer in use  
10. Setting goals and working toward them  
11. Application of scientific knowledge to practical uses  
12. Advancement to a higher-level job or position

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**Think Critically**

13. Reread the case study about Rick’s work history. Discuss why you think he has not progressed toward a stable job. What would you recommend that he do next?

14. If you are currently employed, do you think that your present job might develop into a stable job? Why or why not?

15. Do you think that hard work and quality effort pay off? Or is this just a myth that parents, teachers, and employers want you to believe?

16. Some young people not enrolled in a work experience program leave after school and go to a job. They often work from 3:30 or 4:00 in the afternoon to 10:30 or 11:00 at night. On weekends, they may put in up to 16 additional hours. Do you think that some teenagers are trying to work too much while attending high school? Share any relevant personal experiences that you may have had.

17. Several years ago, IBM Corporation began to require high school transcripts from individuals applying for entry-level jobs. This was done, in part, to send a message to students that high school performance is important. This practice has now expanded to many other companies. What is your opinion regarding this requirement?

18. Suppose you have two job offers, A and B. The jobs have different hourly wages and a different number of hours worked per week. Describe how you would determine which job pays more per week.