

# MAKING A TRANSITION<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

Guidelines are provided on supporting learner access, transfer and progression through:

- Supporting subject choice
- Preparing for work experience / employment
- Planning progression

This material is prepared to assist tutors in supporting learners as they make decisions about transitions to further education or employment. The tutor is advised to discuss the programme of support for transition with a guidance counsellor, where one is available to the Centre. In circumstances where a guidance counsellor is not available the tutor is advised that learners should be referred to appropriate services or agencies where the needs of learners go beyond the tutor's level of professional competence to respond.

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## Section 1: AFTER LEAVING YOUTHREACH

Aim: To explore what is available after leaving Youthreach

Learning Outcomes:

- Learners will be aware of a range of educational and employment options to be considered when leaving Youthreach.
- Learners will be aware of sources of information on educational and employment opportunities.
  - Learners will have begun to raise some basic questions about transition to further education and employment.

Materials Required: *Signpost* handout for each learner

Content:

Tutor brainstorms future options with the whole group. Some possible options are outlined below.

Learners fill in the signpost handout with their own preferred options. This can be done individually and then used to prompt discussion as a group.

After generating a list of possible options, these are discussed in further detail.

*What options are available to me?*

- a) Get a job - full time/ part time;
- b) Go on to more training / apprenticeship;
- c) Full time parenting;
- d) Go back to school;
- e) Linked work experience;

If I chose option b) what do I need?

To find out what training is available I can;

- Talk to the advocate or other Youthreach staff member
- Talk to someone in FAS or log on to [www.fas.ie](http://www.fas.ie) ;
- Visit the local colleges;

- Talk to someone already on a course like the one I'm interested in;
- What other ways can I find out about what courses are available?

Learners are asked to consider what questions they might need to ask the college in order to find out as much information as possible about the course that interests them. See list below as some examples.

Key questions to ask when trying to find information about a course

What is involved in the course?

What subjects are covered?

Are there any exams?

Is it a recognised course? Will I be properly qualified?

How long is it?

What kinds of jobs are available at the end of the course?

Do most people get work quickly after finishing the course?

What other things would you like to find out about the course?

A key point for the tutor to make is that the learner may decide to explore a couple of different options. It is also very important for the learners to discuss changing their mind or taking one option now, e.g. parenting, but coming back to another option later.

This would also be relevant for the learner who leaves Youthreach and takes a job now but later decides to return to education or training, such as an apprenticeship.

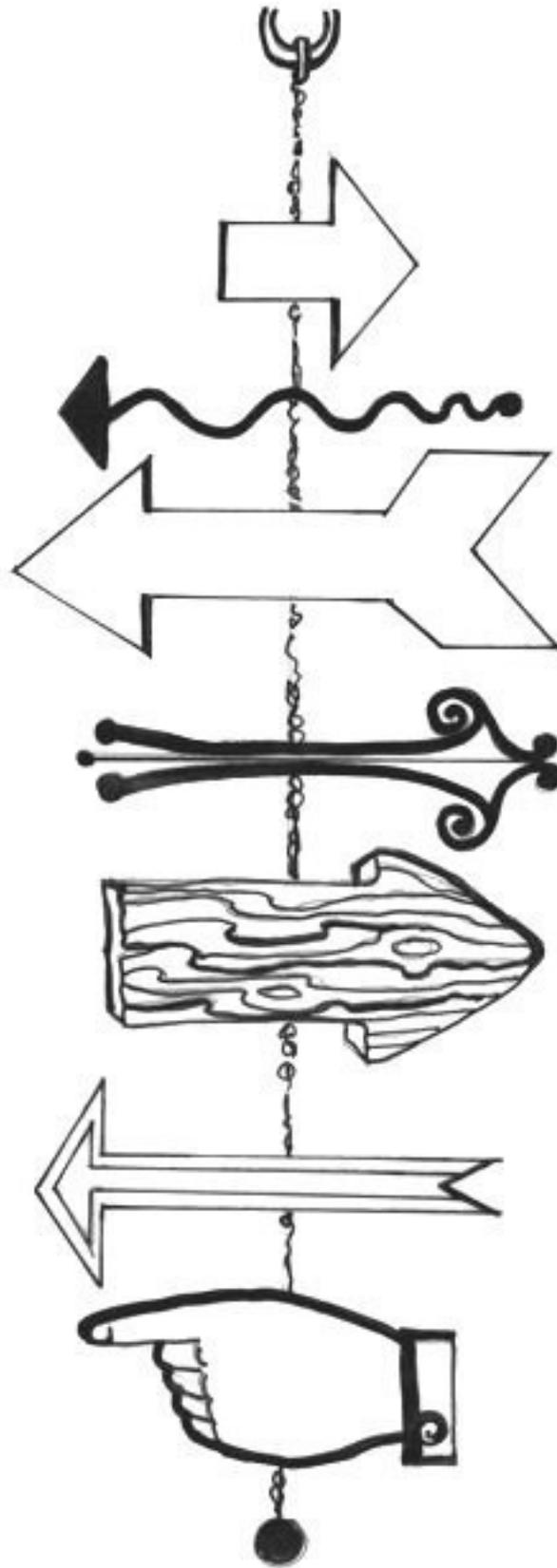
All of the options available after leaving school can be discussed using a similar format.

Useful websites:

[www.careerdirections.ie](http://www.careerdirections.ie) [www.qualifax.ie](http://www.qualifax.ie)  
[www.fas.ie](http://www.fas.ie)

# AFTER LEAVING YOUTHREACH

## SIGNPOST DIAGRAM



## Section 2: JOB SEEKING – GOAL SETTING

Aim: To provide learners with a systematic approach to job seeking which then links to the sessions on interview skills.

Learning Outcomes:

- Learners will have knowledge of a method to help them in goal setting for finding a job.

### Content

#### STEP ONE

Decide the top three jobs you would like to apply for

#### STEP TWO

Decide if you could really imagine yourself doing this job

#### STEP THREE

Have you enough skills to do this job?

#### STEP FOUR

Would this job suit you as a person?

#### STEP FIVE

If you are still sure about this job decide where you think it will be advertised

#### STEP SIX

Look up the advertisement.

#### STEP SEVEN

Ask for help answering the advertisement – who can help you?

#### STEP EIGHT

When will you meet the person who might be able to help you?

#### STEP NINE

Find out as much about the job as possible before you apply

#### STEP TEN

(A) Get a good, relevant C.V. ready – who can help you to do this?

(B) Write a good letter of application.

Or

© Answer the advertisement by making a telephone call – who can help you practice this?

This material can be used on a step-by-step basis and linked with sessions on interview skills.

## Section 3: LOOKING FOR A JOB (1)

Aim: To familiarise learners with practical ways of job seeking.

Learning Outcomes:

- Learners will be aware of different job seeking methods.
- Learners will have identified people who can assist with job seeking.

Materials Required: *Post It* note pages for each learner. Some coloured pens. Flip chart paper.

### Content

Tutor opens with a brief discussion about the myth that all jobs are advertised in the same way. Then put two flipchart sheets on the floor.

One sheet has the heading:

The other sheet has the heading:

PLACES JOBS ARE ADVERTISED

PEOPLE WHO CAN HELP ME GET A JOB

Learners take time on their own to think about what they could put on each sheet. They put their answers on *Post It* note pages, using two different colour pens.

After about 5 minutes, they put their *Post It* notes on the appropriate piece of flipchart paper.

The tutor counts the most common answers on each sheet.

Discussion takes place about these most common answers and the tutor teases out the best places to look for jobs and who can be of help.

A list is drawn up of the best places to look for work and another list is drawn up of people who can help the learners to get work.

## Section 4: LOOKING FOR A JOB (2)

| Aim: To explore important factors involved in applying for any job.

Learning Outcomes:

- Learners will have given consideration to the types of jobs they might be interested in.
- Learners will be aware of the preparation they need to make when applying for jobs.

Materials Required: Copy of handout for each learner of questions below.

Content:

Tutor starts the session using a brainstorming approach and generates a list of the elements which the learners believe should be considered when applying for a job.

A handout of the questions below can be given to the learners and the tutor can explore the elements as relevant to the group. It may be possible to link with other tutors for some elements e.g. C.V. preparation. Learners can prioritise the elements listed below which they would like to work on as a group.

### Thinking Ahead

What kinds of jobs would I like to apply for?  
Where are these jobs advertised?  
Is this the kind of work I really think I'd enjoy?  
Do I think I would be good at this kind of work?  
Is my C.V. clear?

### Getting Started

Do I know someone already doing this type of work?  
Have I practised phoning up looking for a job like this?  
Have I thought about the interview?  
Can I sell myself?  
Will I let people know that I am looking for a job like this? Who should I tell?

## LOOKING FOR A JOB (2)

### Thinking Ahead

What kinds of jobs would I like to apply for?

Where are these jobs advertised?

Is this the kind of work I really think I'd enjoy?

Do I think I would be good at this kind of work?

Is my C.V. clear?

### Getting Started

Do I know someone already doing this type of work?

Have I practised phoning up looking for a job like this?

Have I thought about the interview?

Can I sell myself?

Will I let people know that I am looking for a job like this? Who should I tell?

## Section 5: APPLYING FOR A JOB

Aim: To give the learners a chance to rehearse applying for a job.

Learning Outcomes:

- Learners are able to access job vacancy advertisements in local and national newspapers.
- Learners are aware of methods of applying for jobs.
- Learners identify some job related attributes.
- Learners identify some of their own job related attributes.

Materials Required: Recruitment Section of national and local newspapers.

### Content

Tutor

- Goes to the recruitment section of the newspapers;
- Shows how the section is divided;
- Gives each person a recruitment section;
- Asks everyone to pick out some jobs they would apply for.

The tutor then asks each person to tell the class about one job which they have chosen. They explain why they chose it and tell the class what they think the employer is looking for in whoever they chose for the job.

The class adds anything else they think would be needed for the job

The person then tells the class how they would go about applying for the job and they name two positive things they would be able to say about themselves at an interview

If the class is suitably supportive, they could be invited to name one more positive thing the person could do or say to help them to get that job. **NB:** This should only be done if the tutor feels that it would be a positive experience for the learner.

## **Section 6: IN THE INTERVIEWER'S SHOES**

Aim: To give the learner an insight into the employer's aim to get the right person for the job, thereby increasing their awareness of the job application procedure.

Learning Outcomes:

- Learners will be aware that the employer has specific requirements and will be trying to find out which applicant best meets these.

Material Required: A copy for each learner of one of the job vacancies advertised in the Recruitment Section of the local and national newspapers used in the previous session above. A copy of the handout on *Before the Interview* and *At the Interview* for each learner.

## Content

- Tutor starts by discussing the need for good preparation before going for any job interview. It can be useful to discuss the fact that it is normal to feel nervous but that good preparation will help to reduce nerves. An important way to prepare is to take the time to consider what the interviewer is looking for and why.
- Having had this discussion, it can be very empowering if the learners get the chance to act as job interviewers. Point out that some interviewers are nervous too!!
- Each member of the class is given the same job vacancy advertisement and asked to think about it from the point of view of the employer who will hold the interviews.

Brainstorm with the class what the employer would be looking for from applicants. Highlight key points with the group, for example;

1. Can they do the job?
2. Will they do the job?
3. Will they fit in with the other employees?
4. Are they enthusiastic?

- Brainstorm a list of interview questions, making sure to use the experience of learners who have already been for interviews.
- Discuss possible answers to these questions as a group.
  - Give each learner a copy of the handout covering before and during an interview. Obviously these lists are not complete – you'll need to add answers from the group.
- Tease out the above with the group so that you are sure that they are interpreting them appropriately, e.g. what do they think is meant by, 'keep jewellery to a minimum'
  - Point out that you can always learn from an interview, whether you were happy with it or not.
- In a fun way ask learners to think about things that they definitely should not do at an interview, e.g. belching, taking a phone call on their mobile, asking about money, just saying 'yes' and 'no' etc.

- Tutors can give examples of funny or awful interview questions from their own experience or from all walks of life. Point out that interviewers are human and they make mistakes too.
- In pairs, role-play an interview. After a few minutes swap roles so that everyone gets a chance to be the interviewer and to be interviewed.
- Discuss how it felt to be a) the interviewer and b) to be interviewed
- Discuss what you noticed as the interviewer that you may not have noticed before.
- Discuss how the interviewer could spot someone who would be good for the job.
- Discuss what you could do to make a good impression at an interview like this
- Ask people to write down any questions that they are afraid of. Collect all their questions and try as a group to come up with good answers to each one (no one needs to say what question was theirs. Privacy is important)
  - The group will then see that there are ways around some tough questions and will be given examples of good answers they may not already have considered.
- Point out the importance of highlighting the positive. Remind the learners that if they have been called for an interview, the employer already thinks they are capable of doing the job.
- Finish by highlighting again the need for good preparation.

## IN THE INTERVIEWER'S SHOES

### BEFORE THE INTERVIEW

- Make sure to look your best – keep jewellery to a minimum; ○ Dress appropriately for the job; ○ Find out what the job involves; ○ Be able to say why you want the job; ○ Be enthusiastic;
- Show you are willing to learn;
- Be able to give reasons if you have gaps in your C.V.; ○ Find out how to get to the place where the interview is being held;
- Don't jump to conclusions e.g. if they say they know one of your family, or if they know your address;
- Prepare for some common questions e.g. 'how would you handle an angry customer?'; ○ Turn off your mobile phone.

### AT THE INTERVIEW

Be on time;  
Smile!!! ;

Give a firm handshake and wait to be told to sit down;  
Look the interviewer in the eye;  
Give honest answers – but be positive;  
Don't be afraid to speak positively about yourself;  
Be ready to talk about your hobbies;  
Don't just say 'yes' and 'no';  
Show you are willing to work hard;  
You can ask the interviewer for feedback when you are leaving.

## Section 7: LOOKING AT THINGS FROM THE EMPLOYER'S POINT OF VIEW

Aim: Learners consider the work situation from the employer's perspective.

Learning Outcomes:

- Learners will be aware of the need for employees to show consideration for their fellow employees and employer.

Materials Required: Copy of the *Case Study* for each learner.

### Content

Tutor introduces the topic by exploring the key factors involved in being a reliable employee.

Using the following case study, the tutor explores issues as they leave to become part of the workforce, e.g. issues regarding consideration for fellow employees and their employer.

### CASE STUDY

Sharon has been a hairdresser for fifteen years. She started out at 16 and now, at 31, she has just set up her own business – a hair salon called 'Clean Cut.' Having her own salon is her dream come true, but she is exhausted and very nervous as she starts out on her second week open. Now she realises what pressure being a boss is. She has had to deal with builders, banks and new staff, not to mention new customers. AAHH!!!!

She arrives to work at 8.30 on Monday of the second week. She is fully booked for the day and so are the other stylists. The trainee stylists have all been very helpful except for Tracey who has been late three times already. Sharon really needs to make a good impression on her new customers if she is going to build a good business.

At 9.00 the phone rings, just as the first customer is arriving in the door. It's Tracey, the 17 year old trainee stylist.

"Sorry I won't be in today because I'm sick. Bye"

Sharon looks at the full appointment book and watches the salon getting really busy. Panic sets in. She really needed Tracey in today. She knows that Tracey went to her sister's wedding at the weekend and is sure that she is skiving off with a hangover. She's really annoyed with her because Tracey knew

the salon was fully booked today. Now everyone else would have to work twice as hard and customers would definitely be kept waiting, leaving a really bad impression. They are all annoyed with her for making up excuses and leaving them in the lurch.

DISCUSS:

1. What kind of impression do you think Tracey has made?
2. Do you think Tracey should be paid for that day?
3. If Tracey does this again, what do you think Sharon should do?
4. How will Sharon explain to her customers that she hasn't got enough staff that day?
5. How do you think the rest of the staff feel about Tracey?
6. Would you like to have to do extra work in the salon if you worked there because Tracey didn't show up for work?
7. Would you feel differently if you thought Tracey was genuinely sick?
8. Have you ever experienced going to a hairdresser and being kept waiting for ages?

## Section 8: PLANNING AHEAD

Aim: To give learners time to consider their medium term future.

Learning Outcomes:

- Learners are aware of the importance of planning ahead.

Materials Required: A copy of the *Life Path* diagram for each learner.

### Content

Tutor begins a discussion about where learners see themselves in a few years time.

Learners are asked to consider whether they see themselves moving on to something different a few years after that.

Discuss whether learners feel that one step in life will automatically lead to another.

Point out that it is possible to take small steps towards where they might eventually like to go, e.g. they might like to take one subject in the Junior or Leaving Certificate this year and later take more. This could lead to further opportunities, e.g. an apprenticeship.

Introduce the concept on lifelong learning and how this can occur in all parts of our life and at all stages, e.g. a learner may decide to stay at home as a parent for a certain part of their life but later decide to return to formal learning, or they could decide to combine being a parent with attending part time courses.

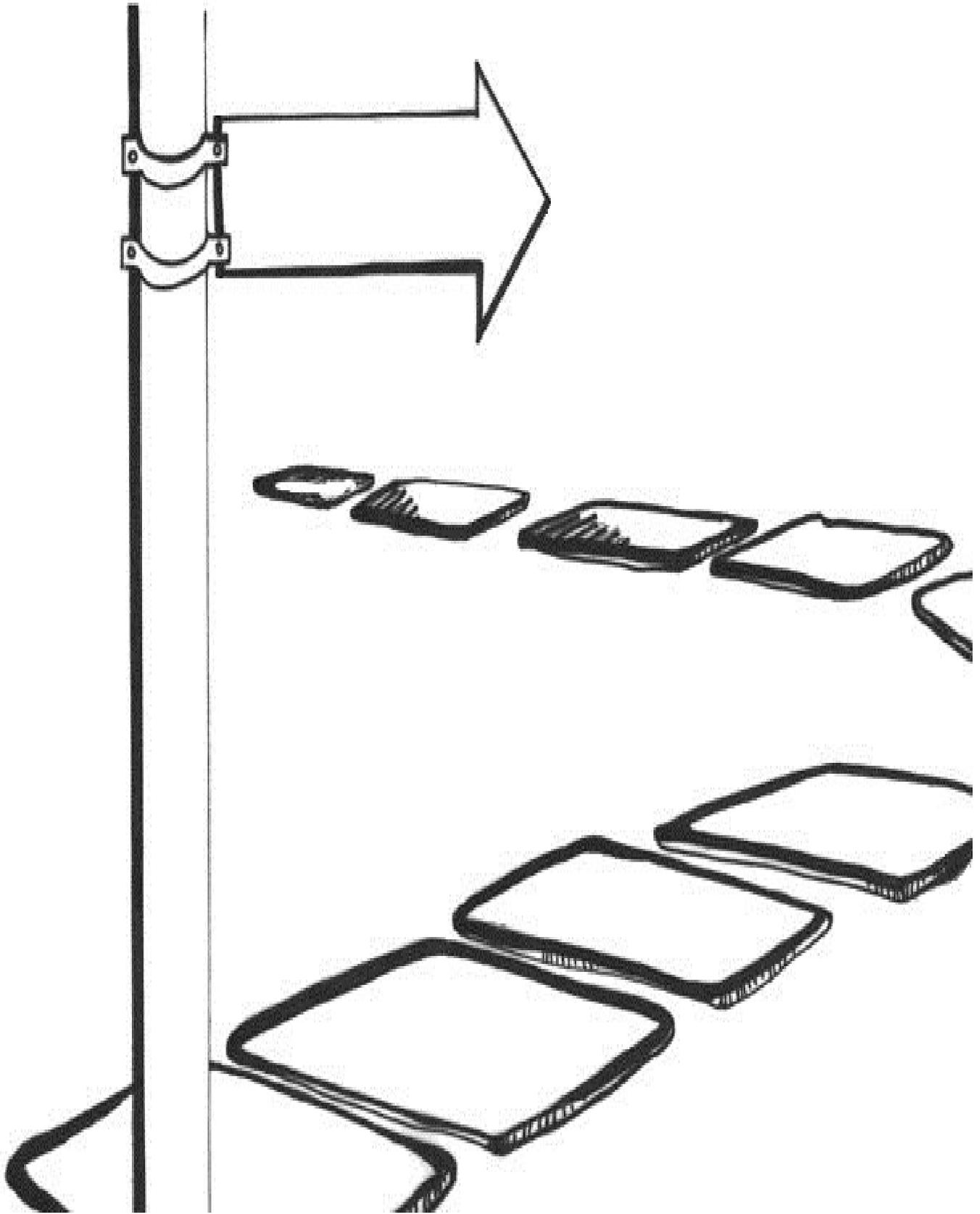
Tutor distributes the *Life Path* diagram. This exercise can be done alone or with a safe group.

Tutor asks learners to:

- Think about your life in the next 5 years or so. You will take lots of different steps in your job, with your friends, your family and maybe a partner.
- Fill in future steps you see yourself taking in each area of your life, using the spaces drawn for the paving stones.
- Discuss your drawing with one other person.
- The tutor highlights how useful it is to take some time to think ahead and to consider how we would like our life to be in the future. Point out that we also need to be flexible because we never know for certain what the future holds.
- This session can link with the *Sign Post* exercise in *After Leaving Youthreach* session above.

PLANNING AHEAD

LIFE PATH DIAGRAM



## Section 9: MOVING ON

Aim: To prepare learners for moving forward by realising they can leave negative experiences in the past behind them.

Learning Outcomes:

- Learners will be aware that we all have things from the past that did not go well.

Materials Required: *Rubbish Dump Diagram*. This exercise can be done alone or with a safe group.

### Content

As we move on, we all have things we would like to leave behind. Everything may not have gone completely smoothly in our lives so far – that's normal.

To help us leave that behind and move on more confidently to the next stage, let's take time to think about a few of these bumps.

Using the rubbish dump picture write down a hassle you'd like to leave in the past, putting one in each square.

You can share this with one other person, or you can share it with the group if you like, or else just keep it to yourself

When you have shared it or thought about it, take the page and crumple it up and put it in the bin. Leave the past behind.

Ask learners to focus on something positive from their past to finish the session on a positive note.

MOVING ON



- Learners identify their strengths to date as learners and workers.

Materials Required: *Rucksack Diagram*.

### Content

Tutor reminds learners of material that has been covered to date in these sessions regarding future planning for education and employment. Learners are asked to summarise where they are now in terms of their planning.

Tutor raises the following questions:

What knowledge/skills / qualities will I need in my future job?

What knowledge/skills/qualities and achievements have I got that I can bring with me to my job or my next course?

Each learner gets a copy of the *Rucksack* handout.

Place one of these examples of knowledge, skills, qualities or achievements in each pocket of the rucksack. You don't have to fill all the pockets!

Each person shares a few of theirs with someone else.

Discuss the point that it is important to remember that, as we move on, we are bringing lots of positive things with us which will help us in the next stage of our lives.

MOVING FORWARD

## RUCKSACK DIAGRAM



### Section 11: SKILLS WALL

*This exercise can be carried out at intervals throughout the year.*

Aim: To help learners to track and acknowledge their own progress.

Learning Outcomes:

- Over time learners become more confident about learning new skills and about the skills they have already acquired.

Materials Required: *Post It* notes for each learner. Flip chart paper. ○

### Content

Pick an area of work you are interested in e.g. hairdressing

Brainstorm which skills are necessary for that job, e.g. being a good listener –‘what would you like done with your hair today?’

On 3 large sheets of flipchart paper, roughly draw the bricks of a wall in three sections and name them as follows:

1. SKILLS I HAVE
2. SKILLS I WANT TO IMPROVE
3. SKILLS I HAVE IMPROVED

Give each learner several *Post It* notes.

Each learner looks at the list of skills needed for their chosen job.

Each learner then takes time to identify which of these skills they already have. Name one on each *Post It* and place on the appropriate sheet of flipchart.

Next step is for everyone to identify a small number of skills they would like to improve and put one skill on each *Post It* and place them on the flipchart.

Occasionally, throughout the course, learners are asked by the tutor to look at the skills they have chosen to improve or work on and to see if they have made any progress.

If they have made any progress they move the *Post It* with that skill to the last flipchart, SKILLS I HAVE IMPROVED

N.B

It is important that the learner names several skills to improve. However, rather than choose to improve or work on them all at once, they need to identify one to work on at a time. It can be helpful to tell someone else which one they are working on, so that they can encourage them to continue with their effort.

The best time to look at the skills wall, to see if anything can be moved, is when the tutor is quite confident that some progress has been made. This helps to build in success.

## Section 12: MODULE CHOICE

Aim: To provide learners, who approach tutors for assistance on an individual basis, with an opportunity to review their original choice of modules.

Learning Outcomes:

- Learners will have an opportunity to learn from the experience of undertaking a module.
- Learners will consider some of the issues involved in changing modules.
- Learners are referred to a guidance counsellor or support agency, as available.

### Content

This series of questions could be used by tutors to explore different modules with the learners. It aims to explore what the learners gained from the module. If they are considering changing modules, it looks at elements that may have been different to what the learner expected. The emphasis is on helping the learners to learn from their experience, while understanding that support is there for them in their choices.

Changing module – some questions to consider. These questions should be woven into the exploration with the learner and are not intended as an interview schedule.

- What did you think the module would be like?
- What did you like about the module? ○ What did you not like about the module?
  - What elements that you liked might you find in a different module, e.g. outdoors?
- What elements that you did not like would you definitely not want to do in another module, e.g. working with children?
- Is this module essential for your future job, e.g. for an apprenticeship? ○ If it is essential, can we get you help with it?
- Who can support you when you are taking this module, e.g. a friend who works in the job area?
- How is the module different to what you expected? ○ How do you feel about changing at this stage? ○ Have you ever changed before?
- What have you learnt by trying the module even if you didn't like it, e.g. that I really do not want to work outdoors.
- Were you given enough information about the module before you started it? ○ Had you ever done any subject at school like this module?
- Did you expect to like the module? ○ What did your family and friends think about you doing it? ○ If you'd like help, when would you like to start getting it? ○ Can we keep in touch during the module?

## Section 13: CHOOSING A MODULE

**Aim:** To assist learners in choosing their modules by providing them with accurate information about each module from appropriate tutors.

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Learners will have identified some of the information that will support them in choosing a module.

**Required:** A tutor to present information about his/her own module to the group. Flip chart paper for recording questions.

### Content

Draw up some preparatory questions with the group. The questions below are presented as examples:

What do I need to know about this module?

What is covered in the module?

Are any parts of it optional – do I have a choice over which parts I do?

Is it very practical – will we be doing a lot of practical things or listening and writing a lot?

What work will I be expected to do for the course?

Can I do more modules like this one later?

Is it like any subject I did in school?

Would it be useful in a) my job or b) my life?

What kinds of jobs is it essential for?

What kinds of jobs is it useful for?

This is only a sample of some questions that could be asked. It would be important that the group comes up with their own questions for the tutor. The questions can be divided up so that anyone who wants to ask a question gets the chance.

Alternatively, learners could develop a list of questions, interview the tutor outside of class time and come back to report their findings to the group. This might link with another module such as Communications.

## Section 14: JOB SEEKING – GOAL SETTING

**Aim:** To provide learners with a systematic approach to job seeking which then links to the sessions on interview skills.

**Learning Outcomes:**

- Learners will have knowledge of a method to help them in goal setting for finding a job.

### Content

#### STEP ONE

Decide the top three jobs you would like to apply for.

#### STEP TWO

Decide if you could really imagine yourself doing this job.

#### STEP THREE

Have you enough skills to do this job?

#### STEP FOUR

Would this job suit you as a person?

#### STEP FIVE

If you are still sure about this job decide, where you think it will be advertised

STEP SIX

Look up the advertisement

STEP SEVEN

Ask for help answering the advertisement – who can help you?

STEP EIGHT

When will you meet the person who might be able to help you?

STEP NINE

Find out as much about the job as possible before you apply.

STEP TEN

(A) Get a good, relevant C.V. ready – who can help you to do this?

(B) Write a good letter of application

Or

(C) Answer the advertisement by making a telephone call – who can help you practice this?

Link with sessions on interview skills.