**Navigating Through Life: Being Ready to Work**

**Work Experiences**

* New jobs bring new skills and opportunities to learn.
* If you find a job you enjoy it improves your physical and mental health. Try to get a job you like, money matters, but so does happiness. You can change jobs if things do not work out.
* REMEMBER, you get better with practice.

**Finding a Job**

* All experiences are valuable! You learn from them.
* When having a job in high school or college be willing to try different jobs.
* Maintain relationships within your network; they may lead to a job or reference later in the future.
* Volunteering leads you to meet new people and have new opportunities. This work is good for the community and will give you valuable experience.
* An internship or fellowship is a way to get the experience you need and allow you to network, which will lead to other opportunities.
* Ask for help in finding and applying for jobs.
* Use services like the Department of Aging and Rehabilitation Services (DARS) a state agency that helps people with disabilities find employment and much more. Use all the resources that you have, people you know, training or a degree may help.
* Be confident, every opportunity is an opportunity to learn!

**Job Interviews**

* Some things to put on your resume are your long-range plan, education, strengths, qualifications, community service, and volunteer work.
* Most people are nervous when they are in a job interview. Interviewing helps to build up your skills. Here are some things that will help you.
	+ Be prepared for the interview by practicing the interview questions.
	+ Know about the business or company where you are interviewing.
	+ Emphasize your qualifications and experience.
	+ Follow-up your interview with a thank-you note. Include some things about the interview.

**Job Accommodations**

* If you ask for accommodations under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), know your own capabilities, ask for what you need.
* Ask questions about the job and do not be afraid to speak up.
* Filling out initial paperwork can be challenging so do not be afraid to ask for help.

**Resources**

[Department of Aging and Rehabilitation Services](https://www.vadars.org/office.html#gsc.tab=0)

[Job Accommodation Network](https://askjan.org/)

[Virginia Employment Commissions local offices](https://www.vec.virginia.gov/find-a-job/vec-local-offices)

[Community College Workforce Alliance](https://ccwatraining.org/)

Info Sheets were developed through interviews with young people with disabilities as part of the Inclusion Project.

**VCU, School of Education, Partnership for People with Disabilities**

**Virginia Department of Education**