

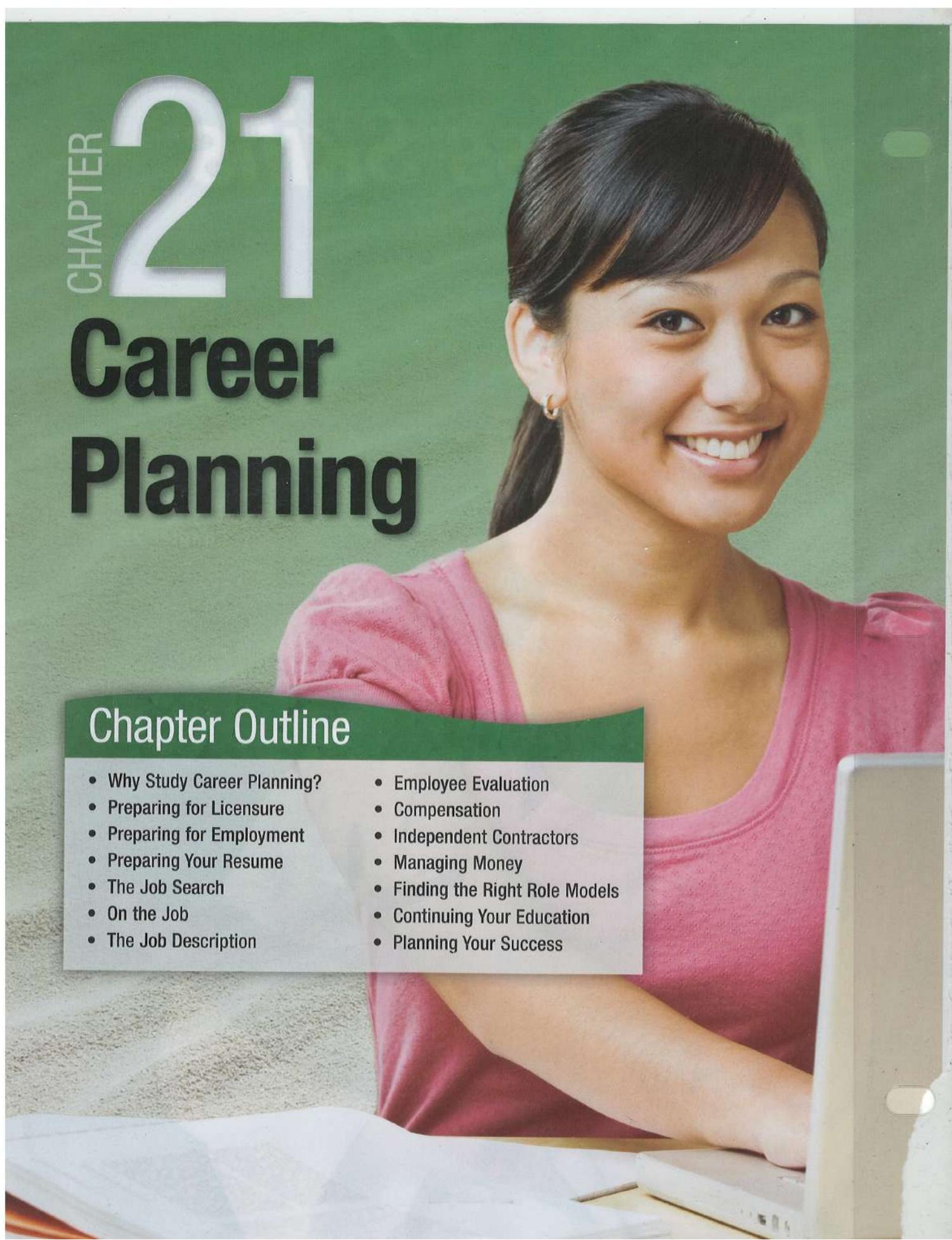
CHAPTER

21

Career Planning

Chapter Outline

- Why Study Career Planning?
- Preparing for Licensure
- Preparing for Employment
- Preparing Your Resume
- The Job Search
- On the Job
- The Job Description
- Employee Evaluation
- Compensation
- Independent Contractors
- Managing Money
- Finding the Right Role Models
- Continuing Your Education
- Planning Your Success



Learning Objectives

After completing this chapter, you will be able to:

- L01** Explain the steps involved in preparing for and passing the licensing exam.
- L02** Discuss the essentials of becoming test-wise.
- L03** Describe those qualities that are needed to be successful in a service profession.
- L04** List and describe the various types of esthetics practices and determine your employment options.
- L05** Demonstrate effective techniques for writing a good resume.
- L06** Discuss methods for exploring the job market and researching potential employers.
- L07** Be prepared to complete a successful job interview.
- L08** List the habits of a good salon player.
- L09** Recognize the importance of a job description.
- L010** Describe the different methods of compensation that are utilized in esthetics.
- L011** Explain the importance of meeting financial responsibilities and managing money well.
- L012** List several ways you can benefit from good role models.
- L013** Understand the importance of continuing your education.



Key Terms

Page number indicates where in the chapter the term is used.

| | | | |
|---|--|------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| commission pg. 658 | independent contractor pg. 660 | networking pg. 640 | salary pg. 657 |
| deductive reasoning pg. 626 | information interview pg. 638 | quotas pg. 659 | test-wise pg. 625 |
| franchised salon or spa pg. 637 | job description pg. 653 | resume pg. 631 | transferable skills pg. 634 |

FOCUS ON

Career Goals

To be successful in the field of esthetics you must be passionate about your work and committed to achieving your goals. Defining your reasons for becoming an esthetician, finding out what you like most about your work, and planning your career goals will help you to stay focused on achieving them.

1. State three reasons why esthetics appeals to you.
2. List the three services you most like to perform.
3. Name two tasks that are not hands-on that you find rewarding.
4. What does your dream job look like upon graduation?
5. Where would you like to be 5 years from now?

A desire to help people is often at the top of the list of reasons why individuals choose a career in esthetics. Esthetics is a caring, nurturing profession that helps others to feel positive about their appearance. However, there are many facets of esthetics to consider in planning your career.

Whether this is your first job or you are making the transition from another occupation, defining your reasons for entering the field of esthetics is an important first step in developing long-term goals and short-term objectives.

As you embark on your newly chosen career path, take some time to think about your personal goals. Begin by naming at least three reasons why esthetics appeals to you. Next list three services that you especially like to perform. What other aspects of being an esthetician do you enjoy? For example, do you like to consult with clients or recommend products, track your sales progress, or make follow-up phone calls to see how clients are doing with a new skin care program? Name at least two tasks that are not hands-on that you find rewarding. Finally, state what you would like to be doing 5 years from now. Perhaps this involves moving on to another aspect of skin care, such as education, running your own salon, or becoming a sales representative. Developing a better understanding of your long-term goals and short-term objectives will help you to make the best choices as you plan your esthetics career.

Why Study Career Planning?

There are many employment options available to estheticians today. Careful preparation for your licensing exam and a good understanding of the job requirements will give you the confidence you need to excel at interviews and become gainfully employed.

- A successful employment search is a job in itself, and there are many tools that can give you the edge—as well as mistakes that can cost you an interview or a job.
- You must pass your State Board Exam to be licensed and you must be licensed to be hired; therefore, preparing for licensure and passing your exam is your first step to employment success.
- The ability to pinpoint the work environment that is right for you is an important prerequisite in targeting potential employers.
- Proactively preparing the right materials, such as a great resume, and practicing your interviewing skills will give you the confidence that is needed to secure a job in a salon or spa that you love.

Preparing for Licensure

The preparation period before you enter the workforce is an exciting time. But before you can actually apply for a job, you must first fulfill the required number of hours for esthetics training and pass your state licensing exam (**Figure 21–1**).

Hopefully, you have developed good study habits and practice skills during the course of your esthetics program. These will come in handy as you prepare for the exam. Your school may offer additional assistance for test preparation. If so, you should take advantage of these options. However, there is no substitute for a solid understanding of the material. Mastery of the course content is essential to passing the exam. As you become comfortable with the various testing methods used in your program, your confidence will increase and you will be better prepared for taking the final licensing exam.

Preparing for the Test

Test anxiety can be a real issue for many students. If you are subject to pre-test jitters, there are several simple strategies that can help to alleviate much of the stress involved. A **test-wise** student begins to prepare for taking a test by practicing the good study habits and time management skills outlined in Chapter 2, Life Skills, that are such an important part of effective studying. The following are some tips that will help you to gain control of the test situation.

- Read content carefully and become an active studier.
- Take effective notes during class.
- Organize your notebook and class handouts for easy review.
- Separate vocabulary lists and study these carefully.
- Scan your text and review end-of-chapter questions.
- Take advantage of any audio tapes and interactive CDs that are available to help you review the material.
- Listen carefully in class for any cues and clues about what questions could be expected on the test.
- Use any study guides that are available from the state board of examination or in conjunction with your text.
- Review tests or quizzes taken as part of your course work.
- Plan your study schedule so that you are not cramming the night before the test.
- Pay attention to any tips offered by your instructors.

In addition to good study habits, there are other, more holistic test-wise habits to keep in mind as you prepare to take the test.

- Take good care of yourself in the days and weeks before an exam; eat right, exercise, and get plenty of rest.



▲ **Figure 21–1**
Developing good study habits and practice skills now will help you prepare for the state licensing exam.

© Milady, a part of Cengage Learning.
Photography by Dino Petrucci.



Did You Know?

If you have a physician-documented disability, such as a learning disability, your state may allow you extra time to take the test, or even provide a special examiner. Ask your instructor and check with your state licensing board. Be certain to make any special arrangements well in advance of the test date.

- Maintain a positive attitude that supports passing the test as a necessary and useful step in the process of achieving your goal of becoming a licensed esthetician.
- Anticipate feeling some anxiety but note that a certain amount of anxiety may actually help you to do better.  L01

Taking the Test

Many techniques can be useful in preparation for testing. For instance, it may help you to practice relaxation methods or to arrive early to become familiar with the surroundings. But the most important thing to keep in mind is that you must have knowledge of the test material. If you are unsure of certain information, take time to review the material beforehand.

Deductive Reasoning

One of the best techniques that students should learn to use for better results is called deductive reasoning. **Deductive reasoning** is the process of reaching logical conclusions by employing logical reasoning.

Some strategies associated with deductive reasoning follow.

- **Eliminate options known to be incorrect.** The more answers you can eliminate as incorrect, the better your chances of identifying the correct one.
- **Watch for key words or terms.** Look for any qualifying conditions or statements. Keep an eye out for such words as *usually, commonly, in most instances, never, always*, and the like.
- **Study the stem.** The stem is the basic question or problem. It often provides a clue to the answer. Look for a match between the stem and one of the choices.
- **Watch for grammatical clues.** For instance, if the last word in a stem is *an*, the answer must begin with a vowel rather than a consonant.
- **Look at similar or related questions.** They may provide clues.
- **In answering essay questions, watch for key words.** Look for words like *compare, contrast, discuss, evaluate, analyze, define, or describe* and develop your answer accordingly.
- **In tests that contain long paragraphs of reading followed by several questions, read the questions first.** This will help you identify the important elements in the paragraph.

Understanding Test Formats

Tests are developed using numerous styles and formats. These commonly include *true or false, multiple choice, matching, and essay* questions. Here are some important points to consider when answering each of these kinds of questions.

True or False

True or false questions offer only two choices. Sometimes the question can be presented so that it seems there is an element of truth in each answer. But it is important to remember that for an answer to be true, the entire sentence must be true. In general, long statements are more likely to be true than short statements because it takes more detail to provide truthful, factual information. When in doubt, look for qualifying words such as *all, some, no, none, always, usually, sometimes, never, little, equal, less, good, or bad*. For the most part, questions that use absolutes such as *all, none, always, or never* are generally not true.

Multiple Choice

Multiple-choice questions typically offer the tester a selection of four to six responses. However, in some cases more than one choice may be true, so it is always important to look for the best answer. A process of elimination can be helpful in determining the right choice. Note that when two choices are close or similar, one is probably right; when two choices are identical, both must be wrong; when two choices are opposites, one is probably right and one is probably wrong. However, this also depends on the other choices. Often, but not always, if one of the choices states “all of the above,” it is the correct answer. If you are unsure, it is helpful to pay attention to qualifying words such as *not, except, and but*. It is also possible to find the answer to one question in the stem of another. As you work through the answer it can be helpful to cross out wrong answers, provided you are allowed to write on the test exam booklet.

Matching Questions

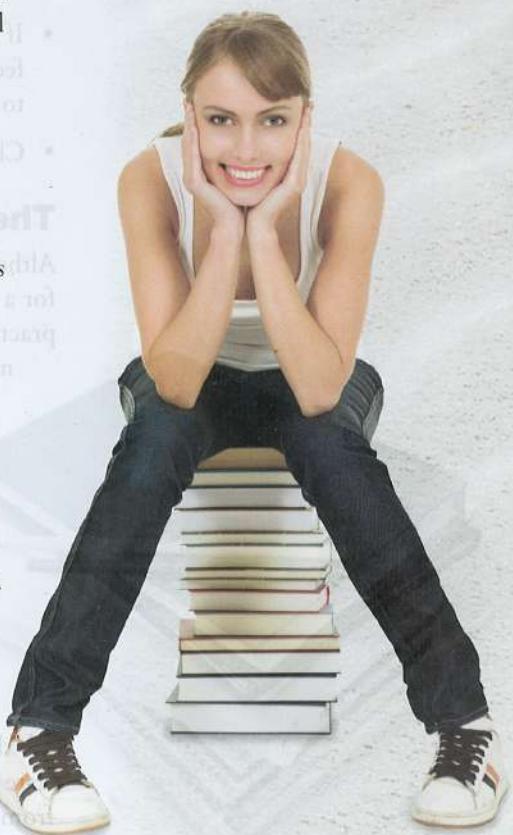
Matching questions to answers is a relatively straightforward method of testing, because the right answer is always available; however, these questions assume that you have knowledge of the material. Sometimes the matching responses to different questions can be similar or confusing. It may be helpful to check off items from the response list as you use them to eliminate the number of choices as you go along.

Essay Questions

Essay questions are open-ended and allow the test taker some leeway in how she or he can present an answer. Before putting pen to paper, always take a few moments to organize your thoughts. Frequently, the question itself will suggest a method for organizing your response. Look for cue words in the question to help you, and begin by creating an outline to structure your response. For example, if you are asked to compare and contrast two items, make a list of the characteristics of each. This will help you to frame your response. It is also important to remember that essay questions are designed to test your reasoning skills. When you have completed your



Multiple choice is the most commonly used test format and has been adopted by the majority of state boards for written and theory-based examinations.



answer, always review what you have written. Be sure you have addressed the question asked completely and accurately and that you have provided the information in an organized and clear manner.

On Test Day

When you are taking written exams, it is always wise to do the following:

- Listen carefully to all verbal directions given by the examiner.
- Do not hesitate to ask the examiner questions if something is not clear.
- Enter identifying information, such as your name, before you begin answering questions.
- Read all written directions carefully before you begin.
- Scan the entire test before you start.
- Wear a watch to monitor your time.
- Read each question carefully before answering.
- Answer those questions you are sure about first.
- Save difficult questions or ones you are unsure of for last.
- Mark any questions you skip, so that you can find them easily later.
- Answer as many questions as possible.
- If you have time at the end of the exam, review your answers. If you feel compelled to change an answer, make sure there is sufficient reason to do so.
- Check that you have entered all pertinent information correctly.

The Practical Examination

Although requirements vary, in most states you must also be prepared for a test of your practical or hands-on skills. If your state requires a practical examination, you will probably receive some notice of the materials that you will be required to bring to perform this portion of the test, including whether it is necessary to bring a model.

Always take time to review any notices, materials, or pamphlets you receive. This information will give you a good idea of what to anticipate. Your instructors can also be useful resources in helping you to prepare for this part of the test. If a trial run is available, take advantage of any opportunities to participate. If you do not, it is a good idea to perform your own trials, paying close attention to timing, infection control, and safety procedures. Finally, make sure you are familiar with the location of the test site and the amount of time it will take you to get there on time. Arriving late will only increase your anxiety level and may even prevent you from taking the exam. L02

Preparing for Employment

When you chose a career in esthetics, your primary goal was to get a good job. To fulfill that goal, you will need to showcase your best qualities to prospective employers. To define these qualities, you will need to answer two very important questions:

1. What are my strongest practical skills?
2. What personal qualities do I possess that will make me a good hire?

The inventory of personal characteristics and technical skills (Figure 21–2 on page 630) will help you to answer these questions. After you have completed this inventory and identified the areas that need further attention, you can then determine where to focus the remainder of your training. **LO3**

Surveying Your Options

Deciding on the type of esthetics practice that is right for you is an important part of the job search. Traditionally, the field of skin care grew out of the beauty salon business, where the main focus was on hair and nail services. Since acquiring separate licensing, the field of esthetics has expanded to include several new business opportunities. While there are many variations of skin care practices, the following general categories highlight those that are referenced frequently.

- **The independent skin care clinic** or **day spa** offers a variety of skin care treatments and may include facial and body treatments, hair removal, makeup artistry, nail care services, massage therapy, and other holistic health practices.
- The **full-service salon** provides a total beauty experience including hair services, makeup artistry, and nail and skin care; it also may offer a combination of other holistic health practices similar to those available at the skin care clinic or day spa.
- The **wellness center** or **spa** is focused on maintaining optimal health and may combine several holistic, complementary, or alternative health-care practices with more traditional medical practices, exercise and nutrition counseling, medical aesthetic procedures, beauty treatments, skin care, and spa services to promote an inclusive wellness program. The wellness center or spa may exist as an independent operation or can be incorporated within a health, fitness, or destination-type spa facility.
- The **medical spa** integrates a variety of medical aesthetic and surgical procedures with esthetic skin care treatments and spa services. The **medispa**, as it is often referred to, may exist in a hospital setting, laser center, or independent medical practice, such as a cosmetic surgery or dermatology office. The medical aesthetic practice employs a diverse, well-trained staff that can include physicians, nurses, estheticians, and other professionals such as massage therapists and electrologists. Treatments in the medical spa are mainly focused on clinical procedures, such as dermal filler injection therapy, chemical peels, laser treatments, and dermatological

INVENTORY OF PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS

| PERSONAL CHARACTERISTIC | Excellent | Good | Avg. | Poor | Plan for Improvement |
|------------------------------|-----------|------|------|------|----------------------|
| Posture, Deportment, Poise | | | | | |
| Grooming, Personal Hygiene | | | | | |
| Manners, Courtesy | | | | | |
| Communications Skills | | | | | |
| Attitude | | | | | |
| Self-motivation | | | | | |
| Personal Habits | | | | | |
| Responsibility | | | | | |
| Self-esteem, Self-confidence | | | | | |
| Honesty, Integrity | | | | | |
| Dependability | | | | | |

INVENTORY OF TECHNICAL SKILLS

| TECHNICAL SKILLS | Excellent | Good | Avg. | Poor | Plan for Improvement |
|--------------------|-----------|------|------|------|----------------------|
| Skin Analysis | | | | | |
| Skin Conditions | | | | | |
| Fitzpatrick Scale | | | | | |
| Basic Facials | | | | | |
| Advanced Skin Care | | | | | |
| Body Treatments | | | | | |
| Use of Equipment | | | | | |
| Waxing | | | | | |
| Makeup | | | | | |
| Retail Sales | | | | | |
| Other | | | | | |

After analyzing the above responses, would you hire yourself as an employee in your firm? Why or why not?

State your short-term goals that you hope to accomplish in 6 to 12 months:

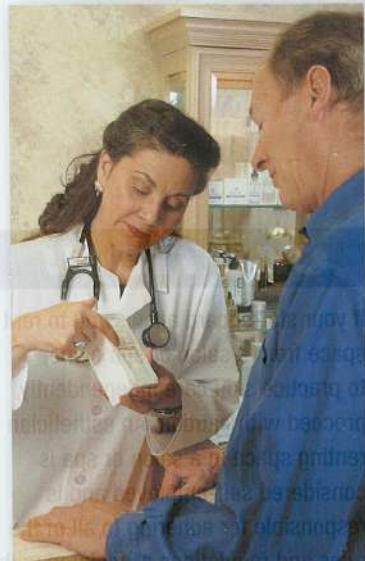
State your long-term goals that you hope to accomplish in 1 to 5 years:

▲ Figure 21–2

Inventory of personal characteristics and technical skills.

- and cosmetic surgery procedures that require pre- and postoperative skin care (**Figure 21–3**).
- The **destination spa** is an all-inclusive spa retreat that offers patrons a wide range of health, beauty, and wellness programs such as fitness, nutrition, massage, skin care, beauty treatments, educational classes, and more. This environment, as the name implies, involves travel to a specific location and includes hotel accommodations.

- The **resort** or **hotel spa** is an amenity spa that provides guests with a variety of spa services that may include skin care, massage, and hair and nail services. The amenity spa may also be available to local patrons and residents who wish to receive services on a regular basis.
- **Booth rental** establishments, or the practice of leasing a room to provide services independently, is an option in some states. Opportunities may exist in a variety of skin care salon and spa businesses. If your state board allows you to operate under this business structure, this may be the least expensive way of owning your own business.  **L04**



© Milady, a part of Cengage Learning. Photography by Stock Studios Photography.

▲ Figure 21–3

The medical spa integrates medical aesthetics and surgical procedures with skin care and spa services.

Preparing Your Resume

The **resume** (REH-zuh-may) provides employers with a summary of your education and work experience, highlights relevant accomplishments and achievements, and is your ticket to employment. Before you begin the task of writing your resume, you should consider that, on average, a potential employer spends about 20 seconds scanning your resume to decide whether to grant an interview.

To create a positive reaction, it is a good idea to know as much as possible about the culture you are targeting and tailor your resume accordingly. For example, if you are interested in working in a medical aesthetics practice, you should use terminology that is commonly accepted in the medical profession and highlight any experience you have that is relevant to this setting. You may also want to take a more conservative approach in your presentation style. However, if you are interested in working for a chic day spa, you might want to take a more stylish approach that demonstrates your knowledge of the latest trend-setting spa techniques.

Formatting Your Resume

There are many styles of resumes. Finding the format that works best for you will require a bit of research. Fortunately, there are numerous resources available to help you. Some esthetic training programs provide vocational guidance counseling or include resume development as part of the curriculum. If your program does not, many resources can be easily accessed at your local library, located on-line, or purchased from a bookstore.

Once you have determined the resume style and format that is right for your needs, you can begin to address more functional requirements. To be effective, your resume should be neat, concise, easy to read, grammatically

CAUTION!

If your state board allows you to rent space from a salon or spa owner to practice skin care independently, proceed with caution. An esthetician renting space in a salon or spa is considered self-employed and is responsible for adhering to all of the rules and regulations associated with owning and operating his or her own business. Responsibilities include but are not limited to: developing your own clientele, purchasing equipment and supplies, maintaining inventory, client record-keeping, and all of the accounting and tax obligations associated with running a small business. Before going this route conduct an honest assessment of your individual skills and abilities. Are you ready for business ownership? More importantly, are you in a position to forego the benefits commonly associated with being an employee such as health insurance, vacation time, or paid time off? Starting out, this may not be the most wise or lucrative option.

correct, and error free. Ideally it should fit on one page and be formatted in a type size and font that is easy on the reader's eye. The content of your resume should incorporate several important areas, including practical knowledge, interpersonal skills, administrative and management skills, and sales abilities. In general, this information is integrated using a structure that includes the following information:

- Name, street address, telephone number, and e-mail address
- Career goals and objectives
- A summary of professional qualifications
- A history of employment or experience
- Any awards or achievements that highlight your credentials

Rather than providing a detailed account of your duties and responsibilities, it is often a good idea to focus on presenting your accomplishments (**Figure 21–4**). The goal is to get the reader's attention in a way that demonstrates your broad-based skills. Notice the difference in impact in the following statements:

- Performed facials on individuals with varying skin types and conditions.
- Developed and retained a personal client base of over 75 individuals of all ages, both male and female, with various skin types and conditions.

If you are applying for your first position as an esthetician, you may be concerned that your qualifications are inadequate compared to those of more seasoned estheticians. Do not let this discourage you; many employers are looking for eager self-starters. Highlighting student achievements such as attendance, academic awards, clinic performance, or volunteer work can also stimulate the interest you need to obtain an interview.

The Resume Checklist

A well-written resume is an excellent marketing tool. As you tackle putting the right words on paper, the following checklist will help you avoid problems and make the most of your individual skills.

- Use clear, concise language and avoid elaborate or cliché phrases.
- Think about writing separate resumes to target different markets if you are applying for positions that have distinct requirements, for example one that targets a medical spa and another for a skin care salon.
- Consider your audience, and use specific words they can relate to.
- Highlight your accomplishments and the methods you used to achieve them. For example, were you selected student of the month for your academic performance or for exemplary attendance?

143 Fern Circle
Anytown, USA 12345

MARY SMITH
m.smith@gmail.com

Home: (320) 555.1234
Mobile: (987) 654.3210

An esthetician with excellent technical, sales, and customer service skills who works well with people of all ages.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- ACADEMICS** Achieved an "A" average in theoretical requirements and "Excellent" ratings in technical requirements, exceeding the number of practical skills required for graduation.
Named "Student of the Month" for best attendance, best attitude, highest retail sales, and most clients served.
- SALES** Increased add-on services to 30 percent of my clinic volume by graduation.
Achieved an average client sales ticket comparable to \$45.00 in the area salon market.
Increased retail sales of cosmetic products by over 18 percent during part-time employment at local department store.
- CLIENT RETENTION** Developed and retained a personal client base of over 75 individuals of all ages, both male and female, with various skin types and conditions.
- MANAGEMENT** Lead a student salon team in developing a business plan for opening a full-service salon. The project earned an "A" and was recognized for thoroughness, accuracy, and creativity.
As President of the Student Council, organized fundraising activities including car washes, bake sales, and yard sales which generated enough funds to send 19 students to a skin care show in El Paso.
- IMAGE CONSULTANT** Certified as an Image Consultant to assist in coordinating wardrobe, makeup, and hairstyles for clientele of all ages in a full-service salon.
- EXTERNSHIP** Trained 1 day weekly at the salon for 10 weeks under the state-approved student externship program.
- SPECIAL PROJECTS** Reorganized school facial room for more efficiency and client comfort.
Organized the school dispensary, which increased inventory control and streamlined operations within the clinic.
Catalogued the school's library of texts, books, videos, and other periodicals by category and updated the library inventory list.

EXPERIENCE

- Salon Etc.** Spring 2010
Student Extern in Esthetics
- Dilberts** Summer 2010
Retail Sales, Cosmetics
- Food Emporium** 2007–2009
Cashier

EDUCATION

- Graduate, New Alamo High School, 2009
Graduate, Best Institute for Image Consultants, January 2010
Graduate, Milady Career Institute of Cosmetology, August 2011
Licensed as Esthetician, September 2011

ORGANIZATIONS

- National Skin Care Association for Esthetic Professionals
American Cancer Society, "Look Good...Feel Better" Program Volunteer

▲ Figure 21-4
A sample resume for an esthetician with limited work experience.

- Present your career goals in a nonthreatening manner that encourages trust in your willingness to work cooperatively in the position that is available.
- Emphasize any **transferable skills**, such as sales training, customer service, or administrative abilities that you have mastered at other jobs and can apply to a new position.
- Choose your words carefully, using action or power words such as *established, accomplished, increased, managed, developed, or coordinated* for emphasis.
- Avoid making any reference to salary levels or requirements.
- State only professional references, and include the person's title, phone number, and business name on a separate page.
- Be honest in the way that you present yourself, stating only those experiences and achievements that are valid.
- Avoid including personal commentary and hobbies that are not directly related to business.

Writing Your Resume

Many people find it difficult to start the actual resume writing process. With a little organization and the right materials, writing your resume can be a lot easier than you might imagine. A computer or word processor is an ideal tool if you are creating your own materials. If you are not computer literate or do not have access to a computer, other resources are available. Try searching your local community directory for print shops or individuals that specialize in formatting resumes. Libraries are also a good resource and typically have several computers available for public use if you are without one. Some schools have computer labs and will allow students time to work on their resumes during study periods. When working on your resume at a remote location, remember to save your work on a separate disk or e-mail the information to a personal address where it can be accessed at a later time.

A good way to start organizing the content of your resume is to compile all of the documents in your possession relating to your education or work experience. These can include diplomas, continuing education or training certificates, copies of previous job applications, achievement awards or letters of recommendation, and memberships in professional organizations. Using this information, you can begin to create an outline listing pertinent information under each of the headings discussed previously. For example, make a list of your accomplishments and achievements, professional qualifications, and career objectives. Condensing this information into small bulleted phrases is a good way to begin developing sentences. Next, you can focus



on choosing the best words to define your experience. A dictionary and thesaurus can be useful tools in performing this task.

When you have completed a rough draft, have someone with knowledge about resume writing review it for you. An objective opinion can lend valuable insight, pointing out areas that you may have overlooked. You should also double-check your spelling and grammar for errors. In this technological age, resumes are often delivered electronically via the Internet. If you are mailing a hard copy of your resume, the right stationery and envelopes are also important in creating a positive impression. Remember to keep your target market in mind when selecting paper, and be sure to buy enough for a coordinating cover letter. A good quality white, buff, or grey bond paper is generally a good way to go. L05

The Cover Letter

Your cover letter completes the presentation of your professional qualifications and should be written using a professional letter format (**Figure 21–5**). Begin your letter with a statement that identifies the position you are interested in, and include the reason you are interested

Your Name

Your Address

Your Phone Number

Ms. (or Mr.) _____

Salon Name

Salon Address

Dear Ms. (or Mr.) _____,

We met in August when you allowed me to observe your salon and staff while I was still in skin care training. Since that time, I have graduated and have received my license, which allows me to practice esthetics. I have enclosed my resume for your review and consideration.

I would very much appreciate the opportunity to meet with you and discuss either current or future career opportunities at your salon. I was extremely impressed with your staff and business, and I would like to discuss with you how my skills and training might add to your salon's success.

I will call you next week to discuss a time that is convenient for us to meet. I look forward to meeting with you again soon.

Sincerely,

(your name)

© Milady, a part of Cengage Learning.

▲ Figure 21–5 A sample resume cover letter.

in working for that particular salon or spa. Briefly define the qualifications you will bring to the position, and include a statement explaining your philosophy of teamwork and the ways in which your contribution will benefit the spa or salon. It is also a good idea to offer some input on why you chose a career in esthetics. Both your cover letter and resume should be typed. Never handwrite these important presentation pieces. However, it is appropriate to send a handwritten thank-you note after you have interviewed for a position.

In addition to your written resume, you may also have a portfolio of your work that includes before and after photos relating to skin care or makeup artistry, award certificates, or letters of recognition for community service or volunteer work. Materials of this nature should not be included with your resume; however, they make an excellent presentation when interviewing. If you intend to use such materials, arrange them in a neat portfolio so the interviewer can review them easily.

The Job Search

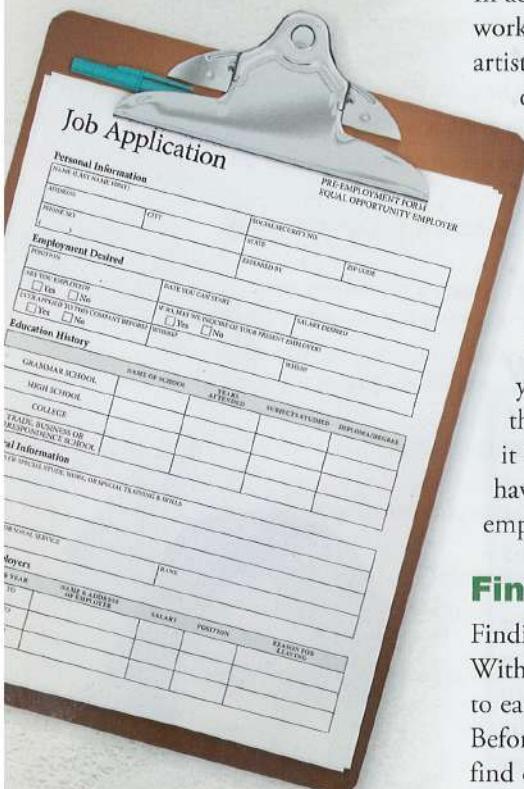
With a completed resume in hand, you are now ready to present yourself to prospective employers. The job search is an exciting process that will open up many new doors. To make the most of your efforts, it is a good idea to be clear about any personal prerequisites you may have and to gather as much information as possible before calling on employers.

Finding the Salon or Spa That Is Right for You

Finding the right work environment takes careful planning and preparation. With loans to repay and living expenses to meet, of course you are eager to earn real wages. But money does not necessarily guarantee satisfaction. Before you accept the first job opportunity that comes along, take time to find out as much as possible about a salon's history and philosophy. This will help you to make critical choices about whether you will be happy working there.

When searching for a good job fit, ask yourself the following important questions.

- **What is the most important consideration for me in terms of work conditions?** Each individual will have his or her own agenda; however, things to think about might include flexibility in scheduling, salary, benefits, opportunity for advancement, safety, or ethical considerations.
- **Am I in agreement with the salon or spa's philosophy?** Learning that you are opposed to meeting a sales quota, performing a particular treatment, or using certain products after you have accepted a position makes it hard to exit gracefully. By taking a look at all aspects of a company's philosophy or policies, the types of products they use and the primary focus of their treatments, you can decide what you are comfortable with beforehand.



- **Do I have any other obligations that may interfere with the demands of this particular situation?** It is always best to be honest. Trying to work around other duties or responsibilities may become a burden that will compromise your ability to do a good job and jeopardize your position. If you are unavailable at certain times or days of the month, make sure your employer is informed and willing to consent to your schedule.
- **What support will I need to ensure my success?** The salon or spa industry has become increasingly competitive. To maintain credibility, you must continue to keep abreast of new treatments and techniques. Finding the support you need to do your job well can become a critical issue after you have graduated. Mentors may not be readily available, and workshops and seminars could become prohibitively expensive. It is always best to find out what options are available to continue your education before you start a job. Learning that your employer is not invested in providing you with opportunities to enhance your performance may ultimately become a lesson in frustration.
- **Are there any causes that you feel passionate about?** Some people have ethical or moral issues that are compelling enough to make them take a stand. These may be related to personal, cultural, or political differences. For example, you may have strong feelings about working on Sundays or using products that are tested on animals. If you hold certain opinions or views that you feel strongly about, be sure these are a good fit and can be tolerated within the environment where you will be working. Becoming a crusader for certain rights or privileges may or may not make you employee of the month.

Qualifying Your Options

Many people enter the field of esthetics with the dream of working in a particular setting. Some might want to work at a chic urban day spa or a health and wellness center, while others will crave a more intimate atmosphere. Understanding more about the qualitative differences in salon and spa environments will help you to narrow your search and find the best fit for your personality and style.

There are many variations of the general categories stated previously. Skin care salons and spas range from basic to glamorous, and prices vary according to location and clientele. These options can exist in urban, suburban, or rural settings. Salons or spas may be franchised, independent, or corporately owned. They can be full service, specialized, or health oriented, and they may be categorized as skin care clinics, salons, and day spas, destination, or medical spas. A **franchised salon or spa** (FRANCHIZED suh-LON or SPAH) is owned by individuals who pay a certain fee to use the company name, and it is part of a larger organization or chain of salons. The franchise operates according to a specified business plan and set protocols and is able to offer certain advantages associated with more corporate environments, such as national marketing campaigns and employee benefits packages. Important decisions such as the size, location, décor, and menu of services are dictated by the parent company.

©PrestiFactor, 2011; used under license from Shutterstock.com

Part 5: Business Skills



Small **independently owned skin care clinics** and **day spas** afford the owner greater freedom and control in decision making, which in turn can allow them to be more flexible in their dealings with employees. Benefits may be fewer; however, this does not necessarily mean that income is inadequate. Practitioners who prefer a more intimate setting and like to work closely with a smaller group of practitioners may find this experience very rewarding. Many also associate the small skin care clinic, salon, or spa with a greater opportunity to build long-lasting relationships with clientele.

The **full-service salon** or **day spa** can be a fast-paced hub of activity appealing to those who appreciate the full spectrum of beauty and the opportunity to become part of a larger team or network. Chic, high-end image salons or day spas may appeal to more cosmopolitan personalities who like to be on the cutting edge of beauty and fashion.

The **resort** or **destination spa** is associated with a hotel facility and can be just the right fit for the esthetician who likes to work with a constantly changing clientele. This climate may also afford more corporate-style benefits and educational opportunities.

Finally, the **medical spa** or **wellness center** may be an ideal situation for those estheticians who are more focused on the health benefits or age-management aspect of skin care.

Before you decide on the setting that is best for you, take time to visit and research a variety of operations (Figure 21–6). If you do not find the type of spa or salon you are looking for in your locale, there are many trade publications, consumer magazines, and Web sites that can provide you with more in-depth information to help you make your decision.

The Salon Visit or Information Interview

One of the best ways to learn about a salon or spa is to request an **information interview**, a scheduled meeting or conversation whose sole purpose is to gather information. Whether in person or over the telephone, having a chat with the owner, employees, or clients who frequent a salon you are interested in is a good place to start. Asking questions without the added pressure of being a job candidate may also be a less stressful approach to getting the answers you want. Just be sure to be diplomatic and prepared; remember those granting an information interview have taken valuable time to help you. In turn you should be prompt, courteous, and respectful of any boundaries they may impose.

Visiting salons before you graduate is also a good way to network. Many salon owners or managers are eager to meet students looking for employment. At the same time, this will give you the opportunity to compare different types of esthetic salons, service menus, pricing, and styles of management. When requesting an information interview, always use professional telephone etiquette. Begin the conversation by identifying yourself as a student interested in learning more about salon operations. Ask to speak to the owner or manager, and politely request a few moments

SALON VISIT CHECKLIST

When you visit a salon, observe the following areas and rate them from 1 to 5, with 5 considered being the best.

- _____ SALON IMAGE: Is the salon's image pleasing to you and appropriate for your interests? Is it neat and clean? Is the decor warm and inviting? Is the physical layout user-friendly? If you are not comfortable, or if you find it unattractive, it is likely that clients will also.
- _____ PROFESSIONALISM: Do the employees present the appropriate professional appearance and behavior? Do they give their clients the appropriate levels of attention and personal service or do they act as if work is their time to socialize?
- _____ MANAGEMENT: Does the salon show signs of being well managed? Is the phone answered promptly with professional telephone skills? Is the mood of the salon positive? Does everyone appear to work as a team?
- _____ CLIENT SERVICE: Are clients greeted promptly and warmly when they enter the salon? Are they kept informed of the status of their appointment? Are they offered a magazine or beverage while they wait? Is there a comfortable reception area? Are there changing rooms, attractive smocks?
- _____ PRICES: Compare price for value. Are clients getting their money's worth? Do they pay the same price in one salon but get better service and attention in another? If possible, take home salon brochures and price lists.
- _____ RETAIL: Is there a well-stocked retail display offering clients a variety of product lines and a range of prices? Do the estheticians and receptionist (if applicable) promote retail sales?
- _____ IN-SALON MARKETING: Are there posters or promotions throughout the salon? If so, are they professionally designed and relevant to contemporary skin care treatments?
- _____ SERVICES: Make a list of all services offered by each salon and the product lines they carry. This will help you decide what earning potential estheticians have in each salon.

SALON NAME: _____

SALON MANAGER: _____

▲ Figure 21-6 Salon visit checklist.

of his or her time. Remember that an information interview is not the same as a request for a job interview, although managers frequently will consider enthusiastic students for positions that become available.

If your request for an information interview is turned down or limited, do not be offended. Some salon owners may have time for only a brief telephone conversation or may be unwilling to disclose what they consider privileged information. Others may generously offer you an opportunity to visit the salon and meet them in person. If you are lucky enough to be granted an interview, it is a good idea to prepare very specific questions, limiting topics to key areas that will give you a general idea of how the salon or spa operates. Possible subjects might include:

- The duties and responsibilities required of estheticians on staff.
- How management makes important decisions related to product selection, new techniques, pricing, and other policies.
- What customer service policies the manager believes are critical to operating a successful salon or spa.

► Figure 21–7

A sample thank-you note for the salon visit or information interview

Dear Ms. (or Mr.) _____,

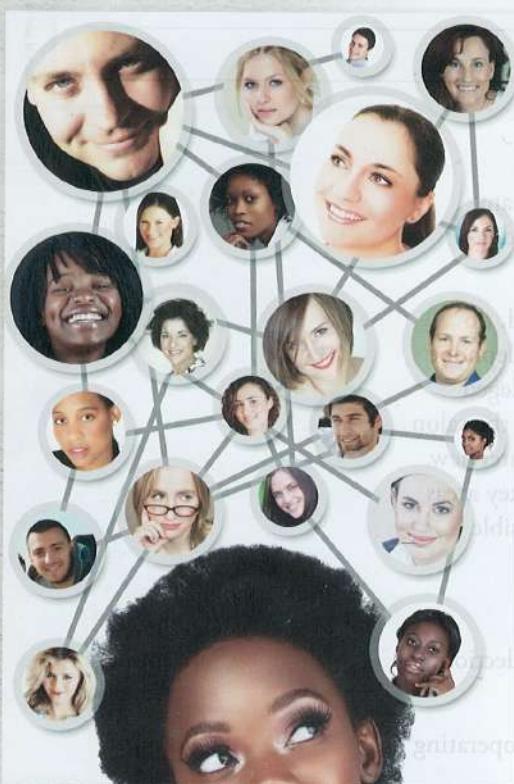
It was a pleasure to observe your salon/spa in operation last Friday. Thank you for the time you and your staff gave me. I was impressed by the efficient and courteous manner in which your estheticians served their clients. The atmosphere was pleasant and the mood was positive. Should you ever have an opening for a professional with my skills and training, I would welcome the opportunity to apply. You can contact me at the address and phone number listed below. I hope we will meet again soon.

Sincerely,
(your name, address, telephone)

© Milady, a part of Cengage Learning.

▼ Figure 21–8

Networking is a good way to increase contacts that can enhance your career.



© Lubia V. Nei, 2011; used under license from Shutterstock.com.

- How the salon attracts new customers or markets its services.
- Who is responsible for retail sales, and if there are any sales quotas that estheticians must meet.
- Whether there are specific policies or procedural guides for employees.

If you would like to solicit additional information directly from employees or clients afterward, always ask permission from the salon owner first. After your visit, it is considered proper professional etiquette to send a handwritten thank-you note (**Figure 21–7**).

Those who are uncomfortable with conducting an information interview with the owner or manager may choose to gather information anonymously, frequenting different salons and spas as a client. Interacting with estheticians and other patrons will give you the opportunity to ask questions indirectly in a relaxed and nonthreatening fashion. In such situations, remember that you should always practice professionalism, tact, and diplomacy.

Networking

Establishing contacts that eventually lead to employment opportunities is another important part of the job search. There are many ways to network or build relationships to further your career; finding the one you are most comfortable with is part of the process (**Figure 21–8**).

Networking is a subtle approach to increasing the breadth and scope of your contacts. It is far less intimidating than a direct

request for a job interview and is a useful exercise in developing important communication skills. Students can begin to develop networking skills in many ways. The following list of suggestions will help you to get started.

- Join professional organizations. Most offer student discounts and encourage membership.
- Attend industry trade shows and educational seminars. Talk to presenters and participants.
- Create a list of ideal affiliations (for example, dermatologists, massage therapists, and nutritionists). Develop a “script” for introducing yourself.
- Find out who’s who in the area of skin care, and request a 10-minute information interview. This can be conducted over the phone or by e-mail.
- Subscribe to trade publications and get in the habit of checking into calendars of events.
- Ask your instructors about local, regional, and national happenings.
- Investigate on-line communities and social media networks in which you can participate.
- Participate in field trips sponsored by your school.
- Keep a list of guest speakers who have visited your school, for future reference.
- Become involved in a charity project.
- Be open-minded and attend business functions or health seminars that will provide positive learning experiences, even if they are not completely focused on skin care. L06

The Employment Interview

The first step in getting hired is to arrange an employment interview.

Hopefully, you have spent some time narrowing your search and getting in touch with your personal job requirements. Now you are ready to focus exclusively on finding a job.

Many students have a list of spas and salons where ideally they would like to work, but it is always a good idea to begin your search by scouting the many advertised positions that are available. Your school’s job board is generally the best place to begin your search. If your school offers job-search counseling take advantage of it. School counselors who are familiar with your work style and know the management style of potential employers can be very helpful in developing leads that are a good match for your skills.

To land an interview you must first send your resume, prefaced by a cover letter, to those salons and spas you are interested in. Even if you have general knowledge about a salon or spa before sending your resume, it is wise to review the salon’s brochure or menu of services beforehand. This information is generally available on-line via the salon’s Web site which may contain other important information, such as a virtual tour of the facility, professional bios, and treatment videos that will help you to frame your cover letter and resume

Here's a Tip

To help you stay organized during the employment search, create a chart that lists the name of the salon or spa, the contact person responsible for hiring, the date you sent your resume or called to inquire about a job, a planned time to follow up, and a brief summary of your results (Figure 21–9).

| Name of Salon | Position Available | Web site | Brochure | Contact Person | Contact Date | Resume Sent | Follow-up Date | Results |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|----------|---------------------|--------------|-------------|----------------|---|
| Best Salon Ever | Entry Level Esthetician | www.bestsalonever.com | ✓ | Joan Smith, Manager | 7/5/2011 | 7/6/2011 | 7/16/2011 | Interview scheduled for 7/22/2011 |
| Next Best Salon | None Advertised | www.nextbestsalon.com | ✓ | Kim Jones, Owner | 7/8/2011 | 7/10/2011 | | Called. No jobs available currently. Owner suggested sending resume and calling back in the Fall. |

▲ Figure 21–9 Interview checklist.

© Milady, a part of Cengage Learning.

accordingly. Demonstrating knowledge of the employment setting shows prospective employers that you are genuinely interested in making a good impression.

You may need to send several resumes and make many phone calls before you are actually granted an interview. Do not get discouraged; you may not begin your career in your dream job, but the right job will come along. Just speaking with someone responsible for hiring over the phone is a move in the right direction. Often, salon managers will not have an immediate position available but may be interested in having a copy of your resume or meeting you in case an opening becomes available later. Do not consider this effort a waste of your time. Each interview is a valuable learning experience that will help you build confidence in your interpersonal skills and become familiar with what to expect. Interviews can also be an excellent occasion to network. Whatever the outcome, always be polite and thank those in charge for their time and consideration. If you are granted an interview, following up with a handwritten thank-you note is standard protocol. This should include a positive statement about why you want the job, if in fact you do want it. Even if you are not interested in a position, always put your best foot forward. The salon community is close-knit and employers may be in communication with other potential hiring managers for whom you might be a good fit.

Preparing for the Interview

Does the thought of being interviewed make you anxious? If so, you are not alone. It is common to feel a bit nervous when preparing for a job interview.

There are many ways to alleviate the pressure of being interviewed. Being organized and prepared with the appropriate documents will put you

at ease and help you make a positive first impression. Even if you have already mailed your resume, be sure to have an additional copy in case the interviewer has misplaced it or in the event that there are multiple interviewers. You should also have some form of identification, such as your driver's license and your social security card. Other important documents include a copy of your esthetics license, any other pertinent licenses you may hold, training certificates or awards, professional memberships, references or letters of recommendation from former employers, and any photos of your work that may enhance your status. Presenting these in a covered binder or portfolio is a good way to appear efficient and organized (Figure 21–10).

We have already discussed the importance of personal appearance in the esthetics industry in Chapter 3, Your Professional Image. This is especially

PREPARING FOR THE INTERVIEW CHECKLIST

RESUME COMPOSITION

1. Does it present your abilities and what you have accomplished in your jobs and training?
2. Does it make the reader want to ask, "How did you accomplish that?"
3. Does it highlight accomplishments rather than detailing duties and responsibilities?
4. Is it easy to read, short, and does it stress past accomplishments and skills?
5. Does it focus on information that's relevant to your own career goals?
6. Is it complete and professionally prepared?

PORTFOLIO CHECKLIST

- Diploma, secondary and post-secondary
- Awards and achievements while in school
- Current resume focusing on accomplishments
- Letters of reference from former employers
- List of, or certificates from, trade shows attended while in training
- Statement of professional affiliations (memberships in esthetics organizations, etc.)
- Statement of civic affiliations and/or activities
- Before and after photographs of technical skills services you have performed
- Any other relevant information

Ask: Does my portfolio portray me and my career skills in the manner that I wish to be perceived? If not, what needs to be changed?

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Describe specific methods or procedures you will employ in the salon/spa to build your clientele.
2. Describe how you feel about retail sales in the salon/spa and give specific methods you would use in the salon/spa to generate sales.
3. State why you feel consumer protection and safety is so important in the field of esthetics.
4. Explain what you love about your new career.
5. Describe your passion for esthetics.

◀ Figure 21–10
Interview preparation checklist.



▲ **Figure 21-11**
A professional appearance
is important when presenting
yourself for a job interview.

important when presenting for a job interview. Employers will expect you to reflect healthy skin care practices.

Keep perfume subtle and your makeup simple, with the focus on a natural glow. Nails should be clean, short, and manicured. If you wear polish, choose a neutral shade. Your jewelry and hairstyle should be unpretentious and conform to the practice of esthetics. If you have long hair, it is a good idea to style it neatly away from your face, particularly if you will be performing a facial. Wear a flattering neutral-colored suit that is cleaned and pressed, and make sure your shoes are polished and in good condition (**Figure 21-11**). To complete your professional appearance, carry a briefcase or portfolio to store your documents. Do not carry a handbag if you are using a briefcase. Too much baggage can be cumbersome and often ends up looking unprofessional. If you do not have a briefcase, a simple handbag and a folder for your materials are appropriate.

There is always an element of surprise when it comes to the interview, however, there are certain commonly asked questions. For example, expect to answer questions related to the following issues:

- Your previous job experience or academic performance
- Your attendance record
- What you liked best about your esthetics training program
- Your individual strengths and weaknesses
- Ways that your skills will contribute to the success of the salon or spa
- Your ability to be a team player
- Your method for handling common problems or conflicts
- How flexible you are willing to be in terms of scheduling
- Your philosophy of skin care
- Your product preferences
- Any services that you are unable to or do not like to perform
- Your approach to customer service
- Your methods for increasing client retention
- Your retail sales philosophy
- Your plan for meeting retail sales goals
- Your long-term career goals and objectives

Many prospective employers will also ask you to perform a facial. This situation can be stressful for some, although others may find the opportunity to demonstrate practical skills a plus. Whichever category you fall into, it is ultimately in your best interest to cooperate. If by chance you do falter, do your best not to bring attention to your mistake.

Another very important area of concern for salon owners is retail sales. In fact some salon owners may be more interested in your sales ability than they are in your technical skills. When interviewing for a job it is important to remember that recommending and providing clients with quality skin care products and additional facial services is a professional responsibility. Expect questions on this topic and be prepared to discuss how you will educate clients and promote additional services. This topic will be addressed further in Chapter 23, Selling Products and Services.

Other difficult questions, such as those in which you are asked about your weaknesses, have the potential to make or break an interview. When responding to such questions, it is important to frame your answer in a positive manner. For example, if you are asked about things that you found challenging in your program or past employment, be prepared to discuss what you learned about yourself in the process and how you have grown. Staying focused on the positive can make all the difference in how the interviewer perceives you.

The Interview

Finally, the moment you have been waiting for has arrived: you have been granted an interview (**Figure 21–12**). Many books are available that offer lengthy discussions on the do's and don'ts of interviewing. You may want to spend some additional time browsing through a few of them. Here are a few basic survival tips.

- Dress professionally.
- Carry breath mints, tissues, and cleansing wipes.
- Be prepared with a compact umbrella that can be tucked into your briefcase or purse.
- Be on time; or better yet, arrive 10 to 15 minutes early.

© Milady, a part of Cengage Learning. Photography by Rob Werfel.

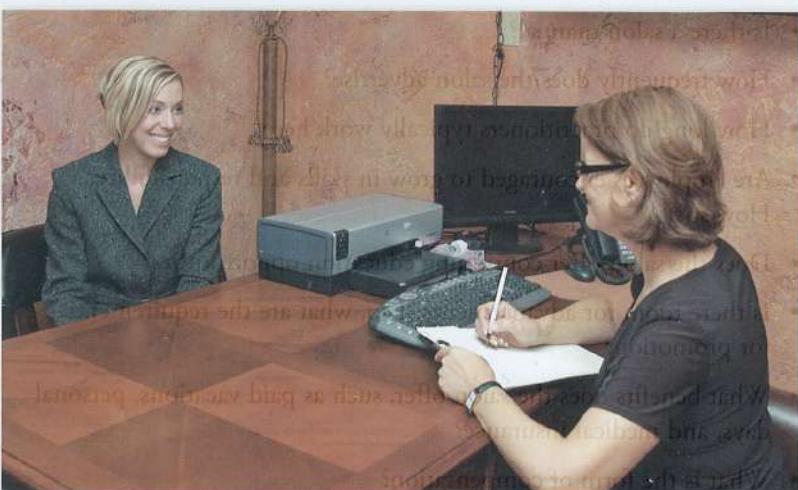


Figure 21–12
An interview is an opportunity to demonstrate your qualifications.

Here's a Tip

If you are unfamiliar with the location of the salon, it is always a good idea to map out the most direct route and conduct a trial run. Whether you are driving or taking public transportation, calculate how long it will take you to get there and add a little extra time should you run into any unexpected delays, like highway road construction or traffic.

Knowing what to expect will help to eliminate additional stress.

- Use good manners. Be polite and courteous at all times to everyone you come in contact with.
- Do your best to appear relaxed and confident.
- Project a warm, friendly smile.
- Never smoke or chew gum, even if one or the other is offered to you.
- Do not come to an interview with a cup of coffee, a soft drink, snacks, or anything else to eat or drink.
- Do not bring children, friends, or significant others with you.
- Never lean on or touch the interviewer's desk. Some people do not like their personal space invaded without an invitation.
- Listen respectfully without interrupting.
- Answer questions thoughtfully, but do not elaborate for more than two minutes at a time.
- Be honest with your answers.
- Frame all of your answers, even those that address weaknesses, in a positive context.
- Speak clearly, and use good language.
- Do not make critical remarks about previous employers or instructors.
- Always thank the interviewer for the opportunity to present your skills.

Web Resources

Many women find it difficult to afford the two or three outfits necessary to project a confident and professional image when going out into the workplace for a job interview. Fortunately, several nonprofit organizations have been formed to address this need. These organizations receive donations of clean, beautiful clothes in good repair from individuals and manufacturers. These are then passed along to women who need them. For more information, visit Wardrobe for Opportunity at www.wardrobe.org and Dress for Success at www.dressforsuccess.org.

Another crucial part of the interview comes when you are invited to ask the interviewer questions of your own. You should think about those questions ahead of time and bring a list if necessary. Doing so will show that you are organized and prepared. Some questions to consider include the following:

- Is there a job description? May I review it?
- Is there a salon manual?
- How frequently does the salon advertise?
- How long do practitioners typically work here?
- Are employees encouraged to grow in skills and responsibility? How so?
- Does the salon offer continuing education opportunities?
- Is there room for advancement? If so, what are the requirements for promotion?
- What benefits does the salon offer, such as paid vacations, personal days, and medical insurance?
- What is the form of compensation?

- When will the position be filled?
- Should I follow up on your decision, or will you contact me?

Do not feel you have to ask every question on your list. The point is to create as much dialogue as possible. Be aware of the interviewer's reactions, and stop when you think you have asked enough questions. By obtaining answers to at least some of your questions, you can compare the information you have gathered about other salons and then choose the one that offers the best package of income and career development.

Legal Aspects of the Interview

While the opportunity to be interviewed can elicit a response to tell all, you should know that many questions are considered inappropriate or illegal. As a job applicant, you have certain rights as established by the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) and federal and state laws. It is important to be aware of those questions that cannot be asked either on an application form or during an interview. These include questions about your age or date of birth, race, religion, national origin, marital status, number of children, disabilities, medical conditions or health problems, and citizenship status. Employers are permitted to inquire about drug use or smoking habits and may also obtain an applicant's consent to conform to the company's drug and smoking policies or to submit to drug testing.

Sometimes interviewers are unaware when they are crossing a boundary that is illegal. You can always choose not to answer inappropriate questions; however, it is in your best interest to be tactful and diplomatic regardless of whether or not you want the job.

The Employment Application

Even if you have submitted a resume, you should also expect to fill out an employment application. Forms can vary; however, most request the same basic information—such as name, address, telephone and Social Security number, education and employment history, the position you are applying for, languages you speak, references, and emergency contacts. Your resume and portfolio will help you to answer the employment application form quickly and efficiently. To ensure credibility, be sure that the information you supply is the same on all documents. L07

On the Job

Congratulations! You have worked hard to finish your esthetics training program, pass your licensing exam, and gain employment—your career as an esthetician is about to begin. This is your opportunity to put your learning to the test.

To make the transition from school to work successfully, you will need to establish and prioritize your goals. Now more than ever, you will need to practice putting your best self forward. Learning to discipline and conduct



▲ Figure 21–13
Getting off to a good start.

yourself in a positive and professional manner will help you develop a standard of behavior that will last throughout your career (Figure 21–13).

Moving from School to Work

Entering the workforce is an exciting time. Amongst this new found excitement, keep in mind that earning a salary commands a new level of responsibility.

As a student, chances are you were given many opportunities to perfect your skills by performing a procedure several times before you got it right. Having instructors to guide you and peers to support you no doubt gave you a good deal of security as you learned the trade. School may also have afforded you a more flexible schedule that allowed you to juggle personal or work commitments to complete

your training program. When you become an employee of a salon or spa, you will be expected to conform to a new set of rules.

Thriving in a Service Profession

The most important thing to remember as you embark on a career in esthetics is that your work revolves around serving clients. Although some people consider the idea of serving the public demeaning in some way, many find this type of work extremely rewarding.

As you continue on your journey to provide quality customer service, the following key points are emphasized to help guide you in providing client-focused service.

- **A professional appearance.** Maintain a clean, neat work environment and a polished personal appearance. These are important considerations in building client confidence.
- **Courteous behavior.** Use good manners when interacting with clients. Practicing proper etiquette is an important part of conducting yourself professionally.
- **Prompt service.** Remember that no one wants to wait. Punctuality shows clients that you value and respect their time.
- **Personal consideration.** Give each client your undivided attention. Respectful listening demonstrates a genuine interest in the client's concerns.
- **Honesty.** False claims damage the client's trust. Be sure to tell the truth when it comes to the products and services you provide.
- **Competence.** Clients need to know they can rely on your expertise. Make sure you are knowledgeable about the treatments you are practicing and the products you use. When in doubt, seek support from supervisors, manufacturers, or other educational sources.

- **Positive attitude.** A pleasant and helpful attitude makes clients feel welcome and cared for. If you cannot provide a particular service or certain information, make an effort to find out how the client can obtain it.

Joining a Successful Business

Joining a successful team is an incredible opportunity to use the training and skills that you have worked so hard to obtain.

Estheticians should always remember that the main goal of a salon or spa is to promote business. Maintaining work habits that foster this goal, such as keeping a schedule that benefits the salon's clients, will become a top priority. You will also be responsible for producing good work and following set standards. Learning to put the needs of the salon and its clients ahead of your personal concerns and performing whatever services and functions your job requires, regardless of personal circumstances, is an ordinary part of the working world.

Being a Team Player

Most skin care businesses employ several individuals and are dependent upon their working cooperatively to achieve success. In today's fast-paced and competitive business environment, salon and spa owners simply cannot tolerate individual agendas that would undermine their prosperity. Skin care services are expensive, and customers are demanding. There are bills to pay and quotas to meet to earn a profit. To increase productivity and keep customers satisfied, smart managers realize that all employees must be equally invested in achieving a common goal (**Figure 21–14**).

Unless you intend to be a one-person operation, it is important to understand how to get along with others and work productively. Salon management is responsible for creating a climate that promotes teamwork and encourages each person's success in the most stress-free and supportive atmosphere possible. It is your job to understand and implement the traits that support these efforts. The following behavioral characteristics are crucial to being a good team player.



FOCUS ON

Professionalism

Once you have accepted employment, follow through on your commitment. Employers invest a considerable amount of time and money seeking viable candidates for a position. Many will spend more marketing dollars on business cards, photos, and announcements before you even begin to work. A failure to show up on the scheduled start day, a decision to quit abruptly without a proper notice, or a condescending remark via social media can result in a tarnished reputation that has the potential to destroy your prospects with other employers for years to come.

◀ **Figure 21–14**
Teamwork makes all the difference.

© Milady, a part of Cengage Learning. Photography by Dino Petrocelli.

Did You Know?

In some cases, those working for someone else may be held liable for errors in professional judgment. It is always best to understand the limits of your employer's liability protection and to seek additional insurance coverage when applicable.

Be Dependable

It is important for all team members to have a sense of being able to depend upon one another. Be punctual, keep your word, and be willing to help out whenever a colleague needs your assistance.

Be Cooperative

Understand what your boss expects of you, and work hard to meet those objectives. If you have finished your own work, be willing to pitch in and help others to meet team goals. Sharing the workload in a cooperative and pleasant manner benefits everyone.

Be Supportive

If you are knowledgeable in a particular area, be willing to share that information with others. Offering support in a humble and genuine fashion is a good way to earn the respect of coworkers and receive positive recognition from your employer.

Be Responsible

For a salon to be successful, each employee must be successful. Be ready, willing, and able to pull your own weight and accept additional responsibilities whenever necessary.

Be Caring

Show an interest in others. At times your coworkers may be stressed or overwhelmed with their duties and responsibilities. When you encourage and support your teammates to do their best, particularly through difficult times, everyone wins.

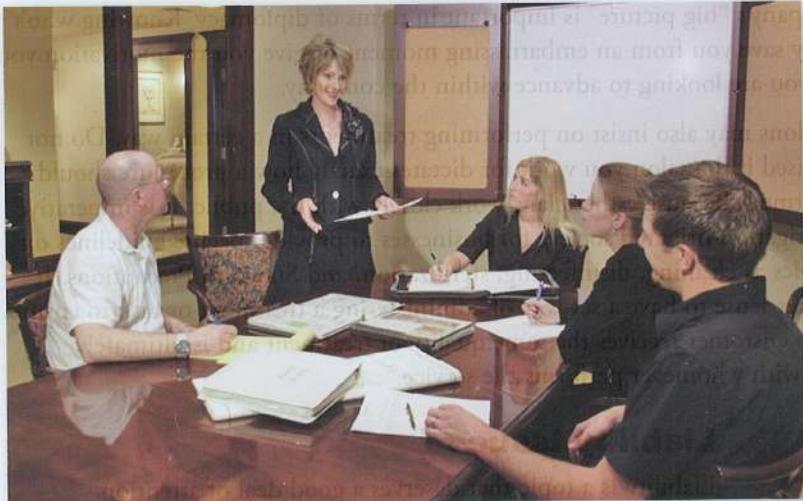
Be Respectful

Each of us has unique talents and methods of doing things. At times you may disagree with another's approach. However, it is important to be patient and work to solve problems in a kind and productive way. As you learn to value differences in others, you will no doubt find new ways to approach tasks and increase your ability to express yourself positively (Figure 21-15).  L08

Recognizing the Value of Policies and Procedures

Knowing what the rules are is an important part of functioning in the work world. Rules and regulations help us navigate many situations. For example, rules and guidelines help us maintain a healthy and productive existence by telling us how fast we can drive on the highway, what forms of payment are acceptable when purchasing goods and services, or what our rights are when applying for health insurance, credit cards, or loans.

Successful businesses also recognize the need for clear directives and work hard to see that all employees are aware of expectations. To keep



◀ Figure 21–15
Staff meetings are essential for building high-functioning teams.

personnel informed and maintain quality control, most well-run businesses will provide a written statement of their policies and procedures. These may come in the form of an employee handbook or company manual. Rules and regulations are instrumental in keeping operations running smoothly; they also help to guarantee customer satisfaction. It is every employee's responsibility to be aware of company policy; ignorance is no excuse for not following the rules.

Chances are you will receive some explanation of how your employer expects you to behave when you are hired. Whether this comes in the form of a verbal discussion or written statement, you will want to be clear about what your duties and responsibilities are. The following list targets critical issues every employee should know about.

- Correct protocol for calling in sick or late
- Number of sick days allowed
- Length of vacation time and number of days that can be accrued over time
- Paid and unpaid holidays
- Dress code
- A detailed job description highlighting specific duties and responsibilities
- Insurance plan and payment procedure
- Person responsible for human resource issues
- Person responsible for your direct supervision

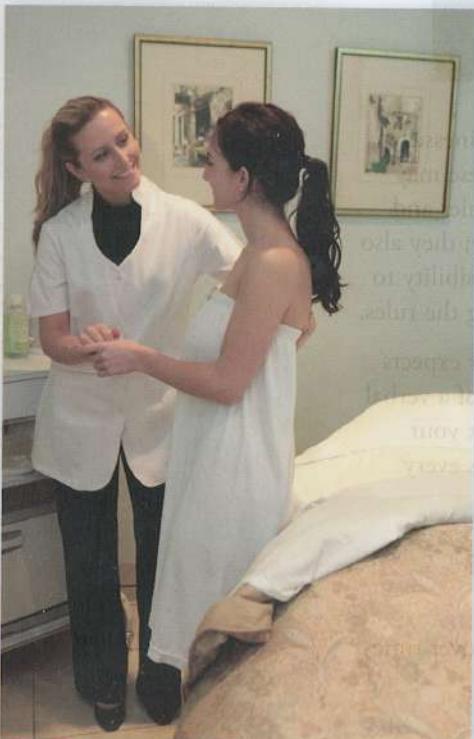
Many salons incorporate a mission statement or philosophy in their company manual. This may explain their vision for the future as well as their position on various issues, such as what products they believe in or how they feel about supporting employee education. This statement can help you determine whether your own goals and objectives will be a good fit.

If you are working for a large organization, the manual may include an organization chart. Understanding who is in authority and how you fit into

the company's "big picture" is important in terms of diplomacy. Knowing who's who may save you from an embarrassing moment or give you the motivation you need if you are looking to advance within the company.

Some salons may also insist on performing treatments in a certain way. Do not be surprised if the salon you work for dictates exactly how a procedure should be performed. Because estheticians work closely with the public, it is imperative in our litigation-oriented society for businesses to provide specific guidelines on such topics as cleaning, disinfecting, sterilization, and Standard Precautions. It also makes sense to have a set way of administering a treatment or task to ensure that each customer receives the same quality of treatment and is ultimately satisfied with whomever performs the service.

▼ **Figure 21–16**
Always exercise care and caution
to ensure the safety of your clients.



© Milady, a part of Cengage Learning. Photography by Dino Petruccioli.

Liability Issues

Liability is a topic that deserves a good deal of attention. The skin care business has become increasingly sophisticated, incorporating treatments that are far more aggressive and complex than they were 10 years ago. And while no one looks for problems, accidents do happen. Reactions or sensitivities to cosmetic products are commonplace. Clients may not fully disclose information, or they may suddenly develop an allergic reaction to a substance they have been using without a problem for some time. Therefore, it is in everyone's best interest, employers and employees alike, to take a cautious approach (Figure 21–16).

Ideally, the esthetician should have the opportunity to practice using a new product or treatment several times under direct supervision before administering it to a paying customer. This helps businesses avoid more costly errors. Still, smaller salons and spas may not be able to afford such practices—the cost of products may be high, and management may be limited in their capacity to bring in professional consultants. To ensure the safety of your clients and to protect yourself and your employer from liability issues, take time to consider these recommendations.

- Before beginning any new procedure, be sure to take a complete client history, noting any contraindications, allergies, or sensitivities.
- Administer patch tests before allowing a client to undergo the complete treatment process.
- As a general rule, when in doubt, don't! Whenever you have a question, seek supervision from someone more knowledgeable than you.
- Always have the client sign the intake form and/or a consent form that explains the procedure and what to expect, as well as the benefits and possible side effects or risks.
- Review the intake and/or consent form, and go over any special instructions with clients before beginning the procedure.

- Be sure to have clients sign the intake form and/or a consent form each time they undergo a procedure, updating information as necessary.
- Should a problem arise, inform your supervisor immediately and document the incident carefully, noting specific side effects and client concerns in the client's profile.

As a professional working for someone else, it is your duty to practice with care and caution. Although you should expect to be covered against any claims that may arise, you should know that, in some cases, even those working for someone else could be held liable for errors in professional judgment. To be safe, it is always best to ask your employer for documentation of the business's professional liability insurance and the limits of protection. Regardless of coverage, it is also a good idea to make inquiries about the cost of obtaining an additional individual professional liability insurance policy. Professional organizations, training schools, and small business associations can be helpful in referring you to appropriate resources.

The Job Description

The **job description** is an important tool that is a specified list of duties and responsibilities that are required of an employee in the performance of his or her job.

Once you are hired as an employee, you will be expected to conduct yourself professionally and perform those services required of you as an esthetician in compliance with salon or spa policy. To carry out your responsibilities to the best of your ability, you should be given a job description. If the salon or spa you are working for does not provide one, it is a good idea to write down those duties that were discussed during your interview or training and review them with your employer or manager. This way you will both have a clear understanding of the requirements. If you do have any questions or some areas seem vague, this would be a good time to clarify them with your boss.

Job descriptions are as varied as the types of salons that exist, and they are typically based on the needs of the salon or spa. Expect that the small clinic or day spa will have a different set of demands than a large resort spa or medical aesthetics practice. The number of employees may also determine which tasks you are required to perform. In most instances, estheticians are expected to perform some variation of the following duties and responsibilities.

- Analyze skin types and conditions.
- Perform facials and other specialized skin care treatments.
- Develop therapeutic skin care programs to treat certain skin conditions.
- Explain treatment protocols and review possible side effects with clients.
- Apply facial masks.
- Apply basic and corrective makeup.
- Conduct hair removal services.



- Conduct spa/skin care services such as body wraps and polishes.
- Recommend skin care products.
- Educate clients on new treatment programs.
- Advise clients on home-care programs.
- Make follow-up phone calls.
- Investigate new products and techniques.
- Advise management on new methods, products, and services.
- Educate staff on products and services.
- Encourage salon clients to try new services.
- Promote retail sales.
- Participate in sales events or promotional activities.
- Refer clients to colleagues for additional services or other professionals whenever appropriate.
- Create retail displays and perform merchandising tasks.
- Clean and disinfect the treatment room and utensils.

Estheticians may also be asked to perform other administrative duties such as the following.

- Answer the telephone.
- Schedule appointments.
- Confirm appointments.
- Initiate and update the client profile or intake questionnaire.
- Record client information and treatment results.
- File client data.
- Review consent forms with clients.
- Maintain product inventory.
- Supervise new employees.

Some salons and spas may incorporate other objectives in their job descriptions. These can specify the attitudes that are expected and the opportunities for growth that are available to employees (Figure 21–17). L09

Employee Evaluation

Developing a productive process for measuring an employee's progress is critical to setting employee and business standards. The esthetician's evaluation is likely to begin with a reference to her or his job description.

The job description provides an excellent standard for evaluating the functional aspects of employee performance, that is, how well you perform the practical tasks that are expected of you. Keep in mind that attitude is a critical factor in evaluating employee performance and may be specified in your job

▼ Figure 21-17
A sample job description for an entry-level esthetician.

Job Description: Entry-Level Esthetician

Every Entry-Level Esthetician must have an esthetic's license as well as the determination to learn and grow on the job. All estheticians are expected to follow specified skin care protocols, and must attend all training seminars and workshops proposed by management for their job level. In addition, Entry-Level Estheticians must report weekly to an assigned Senior-Level Esthetician for a period of 6 weeks to review skin care protocols and raise any questions they may have regarding salon operations or procedures. This helps the Salon to maintain quality control, a significant factor in client satisfaction and repeat business. As an Esthetician, you must be willing to cooperate with coworkers in a team environment, which is most conducive to learning and to good morale among all employees. You must display a friendly yet professional attitude toward coworkers and clients alike.

Excellent time management is essential to the operation of a successful salon. All estheticians must perform services in accordance with set time allowances for each treatment. This helps to keep all service providers on schedule. Estheticians should be aware of clients who arrive early or late and should also keep track of other scheduled service providers who may be running ahead or behind in their schedule. In those situations, the esthetician should be willing to make the appropriate adjustments to their schedule if needed. Be prepared to stay at work up to an hour late when necessary. Keep in mind always that everyone needs to work together to get the job done.

The Responsibilities of an Entry-Level Esthetician include the following:

1. Analyze skin types and conditions.
2. Perform facials and other entry-level exfoliation and specialized skin care treatments.
3. Develop therapeutic skin care programs in accordance with set salon protocols for specific skin types and conditions.
4. Explain treatment protocols and review possible side effects with clients.
5. Apply facial masks.
6. Apply basic and corrective makeup.
7. Conduct hair removal services.
8. Demonstrate knowledge of cosmetic ingredients.
9. Recommend skin care products.
10. Educate clients on new treatment programs.
11. Advise clients on home-care programs.
12. Encourage salon clients to try new services.
13. Promote retail sales in accordance with specified sales goals for your job level.
14. Participate in sales events or promotional activities.
15. Refer clients to colleagues for additional services or other professionals whenever appropriate.
16. Clean and disinfect the treatment room and utensils after each use.
17. Supervise the client intake questionnaire.
18. Review the appropriate consent forms with clients as necessary.

19. Record client information and treatment results.
20. Maintain inventory control in treatment room at regularly scheduled daily and weekly intervals set by management.
21. Inform management of any equipment malfunctions, treatment room, or building maintenance problems that would impact the safety of clients and/or service providers.

Continuing Education

Your position as an Entry-Level Esthetician is the first step toward becoming a successful member of the salon's skin care team. In the beginning, your training will focus on set protocols and procedures. Once you have mastered these, your training will focus on the sales skills you will need to promote proper client home-care. As part of your continuing education in this salon, you will be required to:

- Attend all salon classes as required for your job level.
- Attend our special Sunday sales seminars four times a year.
- Meet the established retail sales goals set for all Entry-Level Estheticians.

Advancement

Upon successful completion of all required classes and seminars and your demonstration of the necessary skills and attitudes, you will have the opportunity to advance to the position of a Level II Esthetician. This advancement will always depend upon your successful performance as an Entry-Level Esthetician as well as the approval of management. Remember: How quickly you achieve your goals in this salon is up to you!

▲ Figure 21–17
(continued)

description. Maintaining a running checklist of your job requirements will help to ensure that you are meeting these important obligations.

Most salons today also use computerized information systems to analyze retail and service sales. This generally includes a detailed account of each employee's productivity levels. Be prepared to review the results of your individual sales performance with your supervisor in an open-ended manner. When queried, try not to respond to questions with a simple yes or no. This approach may not supply you with the feedback you will need to move forward in the best way possible. Whenever you have the opportunity, it can also be helpful to ask your employer for suggestions that will help you to do your job better. This demonstrates that you are willing to grow and learn and are mature enough to handle constructive criticism.

Although the evaluation process may take some getting used to, it should ultimately supply employees with incentive for performing their duties in a way that also helps management to meet their goals, creating a win-win situation for both. In general, estheticians starting out should expect to be evaluated 90 days or 3 months after they are hired, and on a yearly basis thereafter. In the meantime, developing a method for critical self-analysis and soliciting important feedback from management can help you to become comfortable with the process.

Employers generally appreciate personnel who are proactive in assuming responsibility for their own success and may automatically supply monthly sales and service reports to help individuals evaluate their progress. If your employer does not, consider requesting such information or keep track on your own. You may also want to ask a trusted colleague to critique your sales technique, or you can ask clients for suggestions about how to provide better service. Understanding your productivity and client-satisfaction levels can validate those things that you are doing right and provide additional incentive for making necessary changes. Learning to use this information wisely will help you fulfill job requirements and develop solid career management skills.

Compensation

Just as the bottom line for salons is making money, getting paid is the primary incentive for estheticians. You undoubtedly enjoy what you do, but it is not likely that you would go to work if you did not receive a paycheck. *How much* an esthetician is paid varies from salon to salon and is subject to a variety of factors, such as current economic conditions, the type and size of the salon, the method of compensation, and so on. While estheticians should not base employment decisions solely on salary, compensation is typically a strong factor in whether an esthetician accepts a position. All things considered, you must be able to meet your living expenses.

Historically, esthetics grew out of the salon industry, which used a percentage-based or commission-based wage structure. As a result, many skin care salons and day spas adopted this method of compensation. Since acquiring separate licensing, estheticians have gained entry to many other professional arenas. This has opened the door to new ways of thinking about how to pay estheticians.

Methods of Compensation

Skin care salons, day spas, and other businesses that employ estheticians differ in how they compensate employees. Pay structures may be based on salary, commission, or on some combination of both.

Salary

Salary can be based on either a *flat* or *hourly* rate. If you are compensated using a flat rate, you can expect to be paid a certain amount that has been agreed upon per week. Salary levels for estheticians vary, and in some cases are negotiable, but remember: If you are offered a set salary each week, instead of an hourly rate, it must be equal to at least minimum wage; and you are entitled to overtime pay if you work more than 40 hours per week. The only exception would be if you were in an official salon-management position.

ACTIVITY

Go through the budget worksheet and fill in the amounts that apply to your current living and financial situation. If you are unsure of the amount of an expense, put in the amount you have averaged over the past 3 months or give it your best guess. For your income, you may need to have 3 or 4 months of employment history in order to answer, but fill in what you can.

- How do your expenses compare to your income?
- What is your balance after all your expenses are paid?
- Were there any surprises for you in this exercise?
- Do you think that keeping a budget is a good way to manage money?
- Do you know of any other methods people use to manage money?

The hourly rate is a popular method of payment for estheticians and is generally based on company standards. For example, a senior-level esthetician may earn a higher rate of pay than does an entry-level esthetician. Those compensated using this method can expect to be paid only for those hours they work. For example, if you worked 35 hours at the rate of \$10 per hour, you would be paid \$350. If you worked more hours you would earn more money; conversely, you would earn less money for working fewer hours.

Commission

Commission wages are directly related to your performance, which means that you earn a certain percentage of whatever services you perform. In the salon industry straight-commission rates typically fluctuate and can range anywhere from 25 to 60 percent depending on the length of your employment, your performance level, and the benefits that are part of your employment package. This means that if you take in \$1,000 in services for the week and your commission is 25 percent, your gross earnings (before taxes) would be \$250. If your commission rate were 50 percent, your gross earnings would be \$500. At 60 percent, your gross earnings would be \$600. In addition to a commission on services, a percentage of retail sales, generally between 10 and 15 percent, is also calculated.

This compensation method continues to appeal to a number of salon owners, however, as newer methods of compensation become more readily accepted, and salon owners recognize inherent differences in the role of individual service providers and the costs of services, many of those using this system of payment to pay estheticians are establishing lower commission rates and implementing tiered schedules to motivate staff to increase their income. This means the service provider must meet a certain volume of sales and services dollars to earn higher commission rates. Others are implementing a fixed percentage or flat rate for each service. If you are comfortable with this method of payment, be aware that the commission-based model varies according to the employer and may or may not include additional benefits or other bonuses. In addition, some salons may apply surcharges to cover the cost of products used to perform services. This policy can make earning a living difficult for the esthetician who is starting out and has yet to develop a clientele.

Hybrid Pay Structures

Many salons are now using a combination of salary and commission-based structures. Generally speaking, these incorporate a base salary plus a certain commission on services and/or products. Again, the salary-plus-commission model varies and is dependent on the philosophy of the individual salon owner. Typically, this model offers

a salary that is established by an hourly or flat rate, plus anywhere between 10 and 20 percent commission on products and/or services. Some salons also incorporate bonuses or other incentives that are fixed according to performance **quotas**, a method for gauging the amount of sales and targeting production levels. In some cases these quotas will be based on team rather than individual performance. **L010**

Other Factors Affecting Wages

Estheticians can also expect wages to vary according to several criteria, such as an individual's level of training and experience. Other business factors, such as the type of salon (that is, full service, day or resort spa, skin care clinic, or medical practice), geographic location (urban or suburban), and pricing (moderately priced or high end) will come into play.

Today, many opportunities are available to estheticians in a variety of work environments. Each will have its own basis for establishing wages. Although pay scales and methods continue to vary, there appears to be a growing movement toward establishing more professional salary levels and benefits. As you make important decisions about employment, it is a good idea to analyze all aspects of compensation considering salary, health benefits, vacation pay and allowances for sick days, and any retirement benefits that might be included.

Gratuities

Similar to other service oriented industries such as the hair, hotel, and restaurant business, in the esthetics world, tips or gratuities have become a customary way of expressing appreciation for satisfactory service. Be aware that not all salons and spas allow tipping. Most salons and spas today make their policy on gratuities clear to clients before they purchase a service by posting a sign at the front desk or checkout area or by incorporating their position in a brochure or menu of services.

Estheticians can expect the amount a client tips to vary, with most gratuities ranging between 15 and 20 percent of the total service ticket. For example, if a client spends \$120 on a facial treatment, and tips 15 percent, then the tip to the service provider would be about \$18. The most important thing for estheticians to remember about tips is that the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) considers tips additional income. As such, tips must be tracked and reported on your income tax return. While this may seem like a nuisance, it can actually

© Lev Dolgachov, 2011; used under license from Shutterstock.com.

FOCUS ON

The Goal

Always put the team first. While each individual may be concerned with getting ahead and being successful, a good teammate knows that no one can do it alone.



CAUTION!

Some businesses choose to use independent contractors to avoid paying mandatory insurance and taxes, such as Social Security taxes, Medicare, Workers' Compensation, federal and state income taxes, and liability insurance.

An esthetician who meets the lawful IRS definition of an independent contractor is considered self-employed and is responsible for paying all of his or her own insurance, federal and state income taxes, plus an additional self-employment tax. Other periodic estimated income taxes may apply. IRS Form SS-8 "Determination of Worker Status for Purposes of Federal Employment Taxes and Income Taxes Withholding" is an excellent resource for determining employee versus independent contractor status. More information on this topic can be found in *Milady Standard Esthetics: Advanced* text.

prove beneficial in some situations, for example when applying for a loan or mortgage, where you want your income to appear stronger than it might be otherwise.

Independent Contractors

The use of independent contractors is widespread in the salon and spa industry; however, estheticians must be cautious when accepting employment under this status.

According to the IRS, an **independent contractor** is someone who sets his or her own fees, controls his or her own hours, has his or her own business card, and pays his or her own taxes. In effect, estheticians working as independent contractors are free to operate their skin care practice however they choose within legal parameters. What you must know if you elect to work in this way is that you are also responsible for adhering to all laws set forth by your state licensing board and any other local, state, and federal rules and regulations that apply to small business owners. This means paying your own insurance and taxes. If you are offered a position as an independent contractor it is wise to investigate all of the legal ramifications before entering into a binding agreement.

Managing Money

Once you are earning a salary, you will want to keep careful track of what you are spending. Understanding the value of a dollar that you have earned is a valuable lesson in economics and long-term financial success. Particularly if this is your first job, you will need to learn to plan and budget your money according to your needs.

Meeting Financial Responsibilities

Perhaps you took out a loan to pay for your esthetic's education or you need to purchase a car to get to work. How will you pay for these expenses? Creating a personal budget is an important task that will help you to meet your financial obligations responsibly.

Money management is a complex issue that often generates a great deal of anxiety for people. But with careful planning and thoughtful deliberation, learning to manage your money can actually be fun. Many businesses provide automatic mechanisms for taking care of important basics such as depositing an employee's salary into his or her personal checking account, managing savings, planning for retirement, and paying health and dental insurance. Unfortunately, smaller salons and spas may not be able to afford these types of employee benefits. If you work for such an organization, you will need to learn to manage most of these things for yourself.

Keeping track of where your money goes is the first step in financial planning. To get started, write down all of your expenses and then weigh these against your total income (Figure 21–18). Once you understand the amount of money you have coming in and going out, you can make critical choices about your spending habits. Cutting down on certain unnecessary expenses can help you obtain other, more desirable items. Perhaps you would like to save for a special trip or purchase your own home. Learning to manage your money well can make these dreams a reality.

▼ Figure 21–18
A personal budget worksheet.

SEEK PROFESSIONAL ADVICE

PERSONAL BUDGET WORKSHEET

A. Expenses

1. My monthly rent (or share of the rent) is _____
2. My monthly car payment is _____
3. My monthly car insurance payment is _____
4. My monthly auto fuel/upkeep expenses are _____
5. My monthly electric bill is _____
6. My monthly gas bill is _____
7. My monthly health insurance payment is _____
8. My monthly entertainment expense is _____
9. My monthly bank fees are _____
10. My monthly grocery expense is _____
11. My monthly dry cleaning expense is _____
12. My monthly personal grooming expense is _____
13. My monthly prescription/medical expense is _____
14. My monthly telephone is _____
15. My monthly student loan payment is _____
16. My IRA payment is _____
17. My savings account deposit is _____
18. Other expenses: _____

TOTAL EXPENSES \$ _____

B. Income

1. My monthly take-home pay is _____
2. My monthly income from tips is _____
3. Other income: _____

TOTAL INCOME \$ _____

C. Balance

Total Income (B) _____

Minus Total Expenses (A) _____

BALANCE _____

FOCUS ON

The Goal

Always remember that success does not just come to you. You make it happen. How? By being a team player, having a positive attitude, and keeping a real sense of commitment to your work foremost in your mind.

Maintaining important obligations such as car loans, mortgage payments, and other bills will also help you establish good credit. Although some individuals may take a nonchalant attitude toward meeting financial responsibilities, it is ultimately in everyone's best interest to be mature and responsible about handling money. Defaulting on loans or claiming bankruptcy can have serious consequences for your personal and professional credit rating—an important consideration for those planning to own or operate their own business someday.

Seek Professional Advice

Finally, if you have difficulty managing money or feel unsure about how to handle certain areas of finance, such as putting money away for retirement, it may be helpful to seek professional advice. Your local bank may offer such services or be able to refer you to other resources. There are many qualified financial advisors who can offer sound advice on such topics as investing, retirement planning, and credit card debt. If you decide such a service could be helpful to you, it is always best to be cautious. Take time to investigate the person's credentials, and do not feel obligated to act on anything that you are uncomfortable with.

L011

Finding the Right Role Models

As a student, you are given the opportunity to practice techniques and perfect skills under the umbrella of a supportive environment that includes teachers and fellow students. Once you are in a work environment, at times you may feel isolated or insecure about your ability to handle certain situations. Seeking the advice of someone more experienced than you can be a good way to alleviate concerns and gain the support you need.

Take a look around you. Is there anyone whose career status impresses you? Finding role models who inspire and invigorate you is an important part of career development. A **role model** is a person whose behavior and success you would like to emulate. People often think of role models only as those who have acquired significant fame or status within their industry. But the truth is, you may not have to look very far to find people with skills and habits worth imitating.

Perhaps there is a more experienced coworker or boss you admire. Take note of how she handles situations with clients and colleagues. Are there any special techniques she uses to enhance her job performance? What character traits does she possess that keep clients coming back?

© Paul Matthew Photography, 2011; used under license from Shutterstock.com.

Does she read certain publications or attend trade shows to keep herself informed? Paying attention to the habits that have made those in your immediate environment successful is a good place to begin your search. But do not limit yourself: the world is full of positive role models unaffiliated with the field of esthetics whose work habits or character traits are worth modeling. Consider them as well when you focus on how you can apply success strategies to your personal goals.

If you are lucky enough to find a role model who is willing to share her knowledge, use the time wisely. Be thoughtful in the way you present your questions and listen attentively without interrupting, even if you take issue with what the individual is saying. Remember: You asked for this person's advice. **L012**

Continuing Your Education

Upon graduation, you will have a solid base of knowledge to use in building your success. Where you go from here depends largely on your willingness to grow and develop new skills. Esthetics is a dynamic industry that has made great strides over the past several decades. Advances in equipment and product technology have introduced sophisticated new skin care methods that have changed the way estheticians work and heightened media attention. Greater awareness of treatment options has resulted in a more educated consumer who expects estheticians to have answers to more complex questions about skin care treatments and techniques. In today's continually evolving esthetics market, there is every reason to expect that this trend will continue.

To keep up with consumer demands and job requirements, estheticians must find other sources of advanced education once they have graduated. In fact some states may demand that estheticians fulfill a certain number of continuing education units, or CEUs, to maintain their license. Fortunately, there are many opportunities available to those interested in increasing their knowledge. Alumnae and trade associations are a good place to start and are often good resources for accessing other information. Manufacturers and distributors are another viable source of education about new products and techniques, although you should be aware of vested interests and take care to substantiate all scientific data using unbiased methods. Subscribing to trade publications and professional newsletters will help you to keep up with important news and trends on a regular basis. You can also benefit from attending workshops and seminars sponsored by allied health professionals (Figure 21-19).



© Milady, a part of Cengage Learning. Photography by Rob Werfel.

▲ Figure 21-19
Make continued education part of your long-term planning.

This will not only increase your knowledge of associated therapies, but it can also be an excellent opportunity to network.

If you are interested in learning more about management or operating your own salon or spa, you might also consider enrolling in other business-related courses such as those offered at local adult-education centers and community colleges. Becoming Internet savvy is another way to broaden your information base, although it is a good idea to follow through with additional research, particularly if topics are promotion or advertising based. Many books and videos are available that can be purchased or borrowed for independent reading and study. Of course, all of these options involve a certain expenditure of time, effort, and money. People that are committed to success understand that taking responsibility for advancing their education is ultimately worth the investment. L013

Web Resources

Continuing education requirements or CEUs (Continuing Education Units) for estheticians vary from state to state. Associated Skin Care Professionals (ASCP) provides a listing of all continuing education seminars along with the CE requirements for each state and a direct link to each state board. For a complete listing of requirements and seminars across the United States go to www.ascpskincares.com.

Planning Your Success

Many factors contribute to a successful career. We have already discussed several of them, including having a clear vision of the type of environment that best suits you, meeting the demands of your job description, and being committed to advancing your education. With that in mind, always remember that an important area that should not be overlooked is character or personality development.

We already know that efficient time management and a strong work ethic are important ingredients for success. But there are other qualitative factors to consider. Take a closer look at those who have made it. Successful people are *motivated* or driven to achieve their goals. This requires discipline and, at times, a great deal of flexibility. Success is not something that happens overnight. It requires hard work and dedication. There will be times when you hit roadblocks and need to rethink your plan. When this happens, it is important not to give up. Learn to use your setbacks as opportunities for growth, and stay focused on your goals. As you find your own way, it is also important to maintain a code of conduct that you can be proud of. Be clear about what you stand for, and remain ethical in your dealings with others. This will establish you as a person of integrity and credibility. Finally, it is important to remember to be true to yourself—there is no stopping success if you believe in yourself.

Review Questions

1. Name several ways you can begin to investigate job opportunities as a student.
2. Discuss the best methods for preparing for your state licensing exam.
3. List several techniques that can be utilized to improve your results when taking written exams.
4. What is the best way to approach your response to multiple-choice questions on a test? True and false questions?
5. List the topics that should be covered in a resume and identify the general categories they apply to.
6. Name at least five things that should not be included in your resume.
7. List the components of a good cover letter. Practice writing a cover letter that includes these criteria.
8. What should you look for in determining whether a salon or spa is right for you?
9. What is the purpose of an information interview?
10. Describe four types of salon or spa environments. Comment on the one that suits you best, and state the reasons for your decision.
11. Create a list of possible questions that you might ask during an information interview based on your target environment.
12. Name eight possible ways to network.
13. Discuss several practical steps you can take to prepare for a job interview.
14. What questions are not allowed during a professional interview?
15. What is the purpose of a job description?
16. Name and describe two ways in which the esthetician is compensated for his or her work. Which method do you consider the most advantageous? State your reasons.
17. Name several possible candidates for role models, and discuss the best way to approach these individuals for an information interview. List at least three questions that you would like to ask these people.
18. What is the primary reason for estheticians to continue their education?

Glossary

| | |
|--------------------------------|---|
| commission | A method of compensation that is percentage-based and is directly related to the employee's performance; for example, the employee earns a certain percentage of whatever services he or she performs and/or a certain percentage of the amount of product he or she sells. |
| deductive reasoning | The process of reaching logical conclusions by employing logical reasoning. |
| franchised salon or spa | A salon or spa owned by an individual(s) who pays a certain fee to use the company name and is part of a larger organization or chain of salons. The franchise operates according to a specified business plan and set protocols. |
| independent contractor | Is someone who sets his or her own fees, controls his or her own hours, has his or her own business card, and pays his or her own taxes. |
| information interview | A scheduled meeting or conversation whose sole purpose is to gather information. |

Glossary

| | |
|----------------------------|--|
| job description | Specified list of duties and responsibilities that are required of an employee in the performance of his or her job. |
| networking | A method of increasing contacts and building relationships to further one's career. |
| quotas | A method for gauging the amount of sales and targeting production levels. |
| resume | A written summary of education and work experience that highlights relevant accomplishments and achievements. |
| role model | A person whose behavior and success are worthy of emulation. |
| salary | A method of compensation that specifies a certain amount of pay based on either a flat or hourly rate. |
| test-wise | Refers to a student who begins to prepare for taking a test by practicing good study habits and time management as part of an effective study program. |
| transferable skills | Those abilities, such as sales training or administrative skills, that were mastered at other jobs and can be applied to a new position. |