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TO THE GUIDE

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# PLANNING YOUR GREEN CAREER: TOOLS AND WORKSHEETS

Now that you have had an opportunity to explore what it means to be green in today's workforce, it is time to put your plan into action. Take a few minutes and glance through the worksheets that follow. You will find that they focus on a range of topics, many of which mirror earlier chapters in this guide. You will have an opportunity to explore occupations, think through child care and transportation issues, and more. In some cases, relevant chapters of the guide are referenced to make it easier for you to find the information you need in order to evaluate where you are, and where you hope to be, in your career.

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There is no right or wrong way to tackle the completion of these sheets. You may want to use the sheets as they are, or you may want to create a notebook of your own where you can answer the questions or lay out the charts with the space you require to fully complete the activity. Having a friend who knows you well or a family member you trust review your answers or work with you may be helpful. Sometimes we overlook what is most obvious to others.

# WORKSHEETS

These worksheets are meant to be a resource for you as you organize your thoughts, ideas, actions, and objectives. They are not intended to be prescriptive, only to help you define what green job may be the right fit for you. Enjoy your exploration.

- A. Weighing Key Factors
- B. Using O\*NET
- C. Using My Next Move
- D. Using mySkills myFuture
- E. Organizing Your Occupation Search Results
- F. Skills and Knowledge Matching
- G. Rating Your Core Skills
- H. Identifying Education/Training Options
- I. Getting Help with Education/Training Costs
- J. Solving Transportation Challenges
- K. Solving Child Care Challenges
- L. Planning and Tracking Your Job Search
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# A. WEIGHING KEY FACTORS

## Wage

- What is the minimum starting wage you can live on? \_\_\_\_\_
- What is the wage range you need to be in after three years? \_\_\_\_\_
  - Not sure how to answer these questions? It is best not to guess. Start with an actual budget of your current expenses. If you need help, search online for budget calculators that show how to record and track your income and expenses.

## Location

- Are you willing to relocate to pursue a career opportunity? Consider the potential advantages and disadvantages before answering. (*Note:* You may want to revisit this table after reviewing the information about where the best opportunities are for the occupations in which you are most interested.) \_\_\_\_\_

Advantages to Relocating	Disadvantages to Relocating

- Where are you *not* willing to relocate to? \_\_\_\_\_
- Is relocation assistance a must-have? \_\_\_\_\_

## Education/Training/Preparation Time Commitment

Higher wages and better opportunities generally require education or training. Think about what level of time commitment is manageable.

- How much of your own resources are you willing/able to spend on education and training? \_\_\_\_\_
- How much time can you devote in the next year to education or training?
  - 10 hours/week     20 hours/week     30 hours/week     40 or more hours/week
- How long are you willing/able to attend education or training?
  - 3 months     6 months     9 months     12 months     2 years
  - 3 years     4 years     5 years     As long as it takes
- What are your concerns about committing to education or training? Check off all that apply.
 

<input type="checkbox"/> Costs	<input type="checkbox"/> Having enough family time
<input type="checkbox"/> Having enough personal time	<input type="checkbox"/> Finding a job afterward
<input type="checkbox"/> Meeting current job responsibilities	<input type="checkbox"/> Studying/completing the coursework
<input type="checkbox"/> Getting there	<input type="checkbox"/> Dependent care
<input type="checkbox"/> My age, as compared to other students	<input type="checkbox"/> Support of family and friends

Do not let these concerns stop you! Continue to explore your options and talk to a career advisor and/or others who can advise you before deciding how you can proceed.

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## B. USING O\*NET



<http://www.online.onetcenter.org>

This website is a helpful tool for learning more about occupations in which you might be interested. Its most useful features are outlined here, with some shortcuts to getting the information you need.

- Organize the results of your search by filling out one “Quick Capture” worksheet (see below under “Organizing Your Occupation Search Results”) for each occupation you research.

Look for two symbols as you browse through the occupations on O\*NET:

-  The “Green” symbol marks occupations that are green or can be green in some settings.
-  The “Bright Outlook” symbol marks occupations that are projected to be fast-growing and have a lot of job openings or are new and emerging occupations in a high-growth industry.

## ORGANIZING YOUR EXPLORATION

### Explore by Industry

- One good way to organize your exploration of green jobs is to explore by industry. Start with the “Green Occupations” box on the O\*NET website and click “Search.”



- On the drop-down menu of “Green Economy Sectors,” click on one sector at a time to browse the occupations.



- Within a sector, click on an occupation title to get a bullet-point summary of key information about that occupation. Scroll down the page, focusing on the following sections: “Tasks,” “Work Activities,” “Job Zone,” “Wage and Employment Trends,” and “Sources of Additional Information.”



- The “Sources of Additional Information” section has links to other websites that can give you more information about that occupation. If the occupation is included in the *Occupational Outlook Handbook* (available from the U.S. Department of Labor’s Bureau of Labor Statistics at <http://www.bls.gov/oco>), you will be able to link to its description there. That description will give you a more detailed and readable profile of the occupation. Check out the profile to get a clearer picture of the job, including its working conditions and training requirements.

## Explore by Skills and Interests

- Use the “Advanced Search” function to search for jobs that are a good match to your interests and skills.
- Click on “Advanced Search,” then on “Skills Search” and mark all the skills that you either have or would like to use in a job. Then click “Go” to generate a list of job titles you can explore further.

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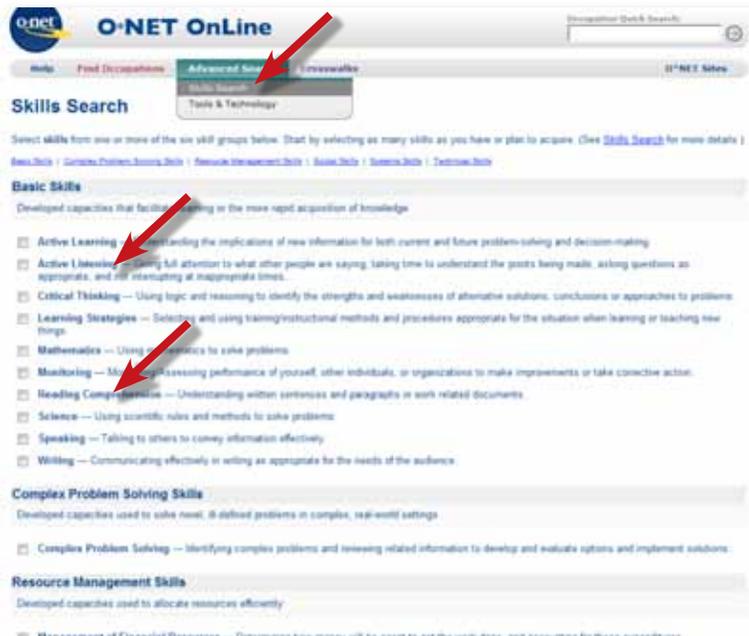
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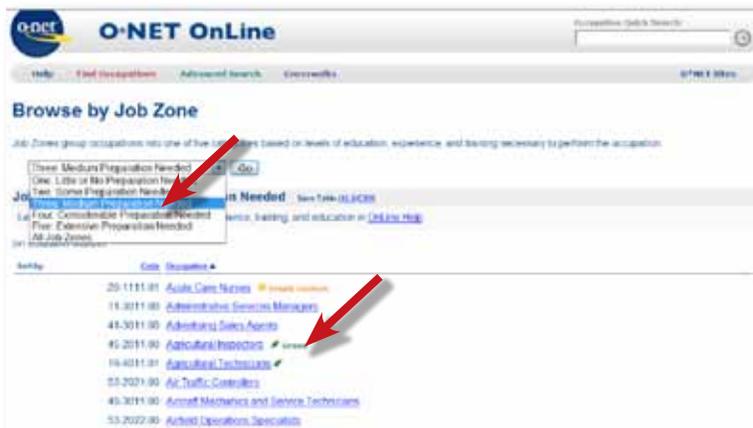
### Explore by Job Zone

If your top priority is finding out which jobs require what amount of preparation/education/ training, you can search by “Job Zone.”

- Under “Find Occupations,” choose “Job Zone” from the drop-down menu.



- A second drop-down menu will allow you to choose a job zone and browse occupations. Then look for jobs marked by this symbol: 



## C. USING MY NEXT MOVE



My Next Move (<http://www.mynextmove.org>) is an interactive tool for job seekers and students to learn more about their career options. The site has tasks, skills, salary information, and more for over 900 different careers. Users can find careers through keyword search; by browsing industries that employ different types of workers; or through the O\*NET Interest Profiler, a tool that offers personalized career suggestions based on a person's interests and level of work experience.

This website is developed and maintained by the National Center for O\*NET Development, under the sponsorship of the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration, through a grant to the North Carolina Employment Security Commission.



### Search careers with key words.

To search by a job name or job task:

- Enter one or more words in the space provided on the left side of the home screen and click “search.” The result will be a list of occupations that somehow relate to your words. For instance, “solar” turns up occupations like solar energy systems engineers, solar photovoltaic installers, and heating and air conditioning mechanics and installers.

### Browse careers by industry.

To use by industry:

- Use the middle space on the home screen to choose from one of 21 industries on the drop-down menu. You can also choose to “see all careers.” The results are organized by jobs where most people work in that industry and by jobs where some people work in that industry.

### Tell us what you like to do.

To search by your interests:

- On the right side of the home screen, click “start” to go to the O\*NET Interest Profiler. This step-by-step program begins by asking you to rate whether you would like to do a specific task and gives you a total score by category of work. Once you have chosen the level of education and preparation you are comfortable with, the profiler gives you a list of occupations that match your interests.

Regardless of the way you get to your potential career list, the site shows whether a particular occupation has a “bright outlook,” which means it is likely to have good employment opportunities in the future. It also tells you whether the occupation is considered green and whether there are registered apprenticeships for that career.

If you would like to look at all the careers falling into one of these categories, click on the buttons along the bottom of the home page.

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## D. USING MYSKILLS MYFUTURE



<http://www.mySkillsmyFuture.org>

CareerOneStop's new website helps laid-off workers and other career changers find new occupations to explore, based on transferable skills they've gained in past jobs.

Here's how mySkills myFuture works:

- *Enter the name of your current or previous job* to generate a list of occupations related to your current or previous experience by O\*NET skill, knowledge, and ability attributes.
- *Quickly compare the list of potential occupations.* The matched occupations are displayed in a chart with salary information, educational requirements, and number of local job listings.
- *Get local information.* Enter your state or ZIP code to see your local salary and job listing data.
- *Find occupation details.* Click on an occupation to view details, including description, tasks, tools and technology, and more.
- *View a skills comparison.* Compare any of the potential matches to your current or previous job in more detail. A page of side-by-side charts and data provides an overview comparison of skills and knowledge, salary, education, and more.
- *View and apply for jobs in your local area.* For any occupation, you can obtain a list of job listings in your local area (e.g., your city) and click directly through to the hiring company's website.
- *Locate local training programs.* From any occupation, click to view information for short- and long-term training programs at community colleges, four-year colleges, and other schools. You can find programs by state or ZIP code.
- *Find related licenses, certifications, and apprenticeship programs.* Details on occupational licenses, certifications, and apprenticeship programs are also easily accessed from any selected occupation.
- *Quick access to help.* Link to step-by-step explanations of each page and brief instructional videos throughout the site.

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# E. ORGANIZING YOUR OCCUPATION SEARCH RESULTS

Complete this “Quick Capture” worksheet for each occupation you research.

**Occupation:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Job Prospects

Rate the job prospects in your state on the scale below. Look at the “State and National” drop-down under O\*NET’s “Wages and Employment Trends” to select your state and find out the employment projection.

1	2	3	4	5
poor/ declining		average/ steady		excellent/ strong growth

Rate the job prospects in the state you would be willing to relocate to using the scale below:\*

1	2	3	4	5
poor/ declining		average/ steady		excellent/ strong growth

## Wages

Use the “State and National” drop-down menu on O\*NET under “Wages and Employment Trends” to see wage and job outlook information for your state and any other relevant locations.

Low/starting wage: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  Meets my bottom line\*

Average or median wage: \$ \_\_\_\_\_  Meets my three-year target\*

## Tasks and Work Activities

Rate the appeal of the tasks and work activities on this 1 to 5 scale, where 1 = “I would hate most of these tasks” and 5 = “I would love most of these tasks.”

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

## Working Conditions

Rate the appeal of the working conditions on this 1 to 5 scale where 1 = “The working conditions sound awful” and 5 = “These working conditions sound great.”

1	2	3	4	5
---	---	---	---	---

## Training and Education Requirements

Level of training/education required, or Job Zone for this occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Specific training and/or credential(s) required: \_\_\_\_\_

\* For more detail on these items, see worksheet A, “Weighing Key Factors.”

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## F. SKILLS AND KNOWLEDGE MATCHING

Higher wages and better opportunities almost always require education or training. This worksheet will help you clarify the requirements for the occupations that interest you, make the most of your existing knowledge and skills, and analyze the total time you will need to complete the education or training needed to move into a green job and advance in a green career.

Start by reviewing the occupations you have researched:

- Gather together all your “Quick Capture” worksheets that you completed on the occupations that interest you.
- Look through them all and compare the occupations based on your priorities.
- Select those you want to pursue further.
- For *each occupation* that you want to pursue further, complete the following steps:
  - List the technical skills and knowledge (sometimes called “hard skills”) required for the occupation and list the related skills and knowledge you already have. When thinking about your related knowledge and skills, think about your entire range of experience, including work done in other industries, volunteer work, hobbies, etc. (If you need more space, you can create an expanded planning grid on paper or a computer.)
  - Research the types of education or training programs that can give you the knowledge and skills you still need to qualify for this occupation. See worksheet G, “Identifying Education/ Training Options.”

Occupation: \_\_\_\_\_

Technical Knowledge and Skills Required	Related Knowledge and Skills I Have

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## G. RATING YOUR CORE SKILLS

For most green jobs, there is a set of core skills and attitudes, sometimes called “soft skills,” that every employer wants. It is important to build as much strength as possible in these areas.

- Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5 to describe how strong you are in each of these core skills and attributes, where 1 = very weak and 5 = very strong. Be honest with yourself!

Communicate well verbally and in writing	1 2 3 4 5
Work well in a team	1 2 3 4 5
Take initiative	1 2 3 4 5
Analyze a problem and offer possible solutions	1 2 3 4 5
Have a strong work ethic	1 2 3 4 5
Have a positive attitude	1 2 3 4 5
Welcome constructive feedback	1 2 3 4 5
Eager to take on new projects and learn more	1 2 3 4 5

- Look at those areas where you have rated yourself a 4 or 5. In the space in the chart above, write down at least one example of an instance where you demonstrated your strength in each area. Refer to these examples in your cover letters and job interviews.
- Next, look at those areas where you rated yourself a 1 or 2. In the space in the chart above, write down at least one idea you have about how you can strengthen each skill area. Be as specific as possible.

## H. IDENTIFYING EDUCATION/TRAINING OPTIONS

### What training do I need?

- Based on the knowledge and skills you need to qualify for the occupations that interest you, identify training providers that offer the necessary programs and credentials. (See the “Matching Skills and Knowledge” worksheet and check Chapter 4, “Educating Yourself for a Green Career,” for more information and resources.)
- See the example provided on the first line to get an idea of how to use this planning grid.

Program Name	Total Courses	Total Credits	Credits I Can Earn for Existing Experience (see below)	Institutions Offering This Program
Associate Degree in Engineering Technology	20 - 21	68		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ABC Community College</li> <li>• GHI Tech University</li> </ul>

- Make an appointment to meet with the program advisor at one of the institutions. Enter the number of credits you can earn for prior experience in the planning grid above. Recalculate the total number of credits you will need to acquire through the program and enter it here: \_\_\_\_\_.
- Talk to the advisor about how long you have to complete the program and ask about any limitations on when courses you’ll need are offered so you can match up this schedule with your personal schedule.

### More Research

- For each institution offering the education/training program that interests you, find out the following:
  - When is it available? (Seek information on both the semester scheduling and the dates/times of classes you need. Are core courses offered only during certain semesters? Are there evening or weekend classes? Can you complete any of the classes online?)
  - Program Prerequisites: What is required for entry? (Note any prerequisites you already have met.)
  - Portable Credential: Will I receive an industry-recognized credential (certificate, degree, etc.) when I complete this education/training program? You can find a list of credentials needed for each occupation on the O\*NET website.
  - What is the total cost of this program, including tuition, fees, books, computer, etc.?



Institution and Program	When Available?	Prerequisites		Portable Credential?	Total Cost (tuition, books, fees, etc.)
		Required	Already Met		

### Quality Check

- Ask people already working at the job you want where they went for training and the types of credentials that they earned. Also, ask whether they would recommend that institution and program, and why or why not.
- Ask your prospective training provider about job placement rates for students/trainees in the specific program that interests you. Also ask which companies typically hire the provider's graduates and whether the provider offers help finding and keeping a job.

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## I. GETTING HELP WITH EDUCATION/TRAINING COSTS

Few students are able to pay for the entire cost of their education themselves. Most receive several different types of financial aid (i.e., grants, scholarships, loans) to help with the costs.

The first step is to find out what kinds of financial help you qualify for. Fortunately, there is an easy way to do this: The Free Application for Federal Student Assistance (FAFSA) is used for all types of federal student aid, as well as for most state and institutional financial aid programs.

- Complete the FAFSA:
  - Get the FAFSA online or by telephone (<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov> or 800-4-FED-AID). File online if you can. (It is faster, and you will be notified immediately if you make a mistake.)
  - Start early! Check deadlines and remember that financial aid is distributed on a first-come, first-served basis.
  - Assemble the required documents before you start.
- The next step is to explore all of your financial aid options. Go to the U.S. Department of Education's "Find & Pay for College—Explore Financial Aid" page at <http://www2.ed.gov/students/college/aid/edpicks.jhtml> to find several websites that will help with this research.
- Visit your local One-Stop Career Center (go to <http://www.servicelocator.org> to find it) to discuss your career plans and the education or training you will need, talk about the research you have done on financial aid, and ask about assistance with your education/training costs.
- If you want more resources, conduct additional Internet research on local, state, regional, and national scholarship programs, focusing on the field you are interested in and personal characteristics. There may be scholarships specific to women, a certain race/ethnicity, your community, etc.
- If you are employed, your company might help you finance your education and training. Some employers offer tuition reimbursement programs or will pay for training up front, especially if the program is related to your current job or a career path at the company. Talk to your supervisor or human resources office about the company's career development policies.
- Use the Financial Aid Wizard at [http://studentaid2.ed.gov/getmoney/fin\\_aid\\_wizard](http://studentaid2.ed.gov/getmoney/fin_aid_wizard) to plan out financial aid packages for different schools. Analyze your total costs for different education options and record those costs in the following chart. Use this information to help you decide which training provider is best for you. Other considerations include the quality and reputation of different programs and their employment rate for graduates.

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○ Summarize your research on the financial aid package options you have assembled for different schools:

School	Total Cost Per Program or Year (tuition, books, fees, etc.)	Grants and Amounts Available	Scholarships and Amounts Available	Loans and Amounts Available	Support Available From One-Stop Career Center, Employer, or Other Sources	Final Cost (subtract all assistance amounts from cost in column 2)

Be sure to review Chapter 4, “Educating Yourself for a Green Career,” for further information on financing your training and education.

## J. SOLVING TRANSPORTATION CHALLENGES

Plan now for how you will address transportation needs during education/training and in your new job.

### Planning

- Outline your travel schedule (example: home to education/training and/or work, plus child care):

Starting Point	Destination	Arrival Time	Transport Option	Backup Plan
Home	Child care	8:00	Subway, arrive at 7:50	Bus, arrive at 7:40
Child care	Job site	9:00	Bus, arrive at 8:30, walk 4 blocks	Ride with friend

- If you will be relying on public transportation, research the transit routes and schedules to find the most efficient options that fit with your travel schedule. Include route numbers, stops, departure and arrival times, etc. so you can see your transit plan in detail. (Example: Catch #32 bus at Beech St. 7:18 AM; arrive child care center 7:50 AM; etc.)
  - Note:* If you will be training or working at multiple sites, you will need a separate transit plan for getting to each site.

Starting Point	Destination	Arrival Time	Transport Option	Backup Plan

- Is ride-sharing an option? It is most likely to work if you don't need to drop your kids off at a child care provider. Check with the student services or human resources office at the school or the training provider to find out about any sponsored ride-share programs that may be available.

### Help With Transportation Costs

- Research local sources of transportation assistance:
  - Transit passes (bus, rail and/or subway) for getting to training or work might be available from the following:
    - Local nonprofit organizations
    - Faith-based organizations
    - One-Stop Career Centers
    - Individual job training programs
    - Your employer
  - Research local programs that help low-income families purchase cars for the purpose of getting or retaining employment. Contact your local One-Stop Career Center or a local nonprofit organization that helps low-income individuals find and keep a job.

## K. SOLVING CHILD CARE CHALLENGES

Plan now for how you will address child care needs during education/training and in your new job.

- If you already have a child care provider, find out if that provider can accommodate the hours you will need child care during education/training or in your new job.

### Finding and Choosing a Provider

Broadly speaking, there are three basic child care options: informal (family, friend, or neighbor); licensed provider; and employer-provided. There are pros and cons to each:

Type of Provider	Pros	Cons
Informal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usually more affordable</li> <li>• You may know the person better</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be less reliable if the person doesn't have someone to provide back-up in case of emergency</li> <li>• May not be reimbursable under dependent care savings plans or social services programs</li> </ul>
Licensed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providers are trained</li> <li>• Enough staff to provide care even if someone doesn't show up for work</li> <li>• Reimbursable</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May cost more</li> <li>• May not be conveniently located</li> </ul>
Employer-provided	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trained providers</li> <li>• Adequate staffing</li> <li>• Usually affordable (some employers pay part or all of cost)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not available in many workplaces</li> </ul>

- Start by asking if the training provider or your employer offers child care on-site. This can be a great convenience.
- To find a licensed provider, contact the following sources for information and referrals:
  - Your training or education provider
  - Local women's centers
  - One-Stop Career Centers
  - National Association of Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies (<http://www.naccrra.org>)
- Interview several potential child care providers to make sure you are comfortable with the quality of care. See the "Finding Quality Child Care" checklist in Chapter 8, "Overcoming Challenges on Your Career Path," for details.

### Getting Help with Child Care Costs

For working families with low incomes, parents may be eligible to receive child care subsidies or receive care at a reduced fee through state child care assistance programs. Contact information and links for state agencies are available at <http://nccic.acf.hhs.gov/statedata/dirs/display.cfm?title=ccdf>.

Other possible sources of child care assistance are your local One-Stop Career Center, your education/training provider, and local community organizations.

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- Research your options for child care assistance:

Source of Assistance	Do I Qualify?	What types of providers are reimbursed?	How much of the costs are covered?	Is there a waiting list? When can I expect to receive assistance?
State or Local Social Services/ Child Care Agency				
One-Stop Career Center				
Training Provider				

Another option for low-income families with young children is the Head Start program. Head Start (for kids ages three to five) and Early Head Start (for kids ages zero to three and pregnant women) helps young children prepare to enter school by providing quality child care that emphasizes activities that promote learning and social development. The program is also family-centered, helping parents to find the support they need to nurture their children. To find the Head Start and Early Head Start programs serving your community, visit <http://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/hslc/HeadStartOffices>.

- Contact your local Head Start office to apply or find out if your family is eligible.

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# I. PLANNING AND TRACKING YOUR JOB SEARCH

## Getting Placement Assistance

- Make use of job placement assistance offered by the institution that provided your education or training, and by the One-Stop Career Center in your area. (See <http://www.servicelocator.org> to find your nearest center.) Make an appointment to meet with each to discuss how they can help you, ideally before you complete your program.

## Searching Online

Most job postings are now online. It is essential to make online resources a key part of your job search.

- Investigate the many online job listing sites that are available. There are many general and green-focused sites out there. Make use of the tailored search and update functions offered by the sites. (See Chapter 5, “Finding Your Green Job,” for specific site suggestions.)
- Be sure to check the websites of companies you would be interested in working for often; they probably post job listings on their own sites.

## Traditional Newspaper Ads

Newspaper ads (both printed and online) remain a source for job postings.

- Look at the postings in the newspapers for the areas in which you are willing to work.
- Note that you can view many newspapers’ classified ads on their websites. Also, visit [http://media.monster.com/a/i/infomons/pdf/NPP\\_PartnerList\\_2009.pdf](http://media.monster.com/a/i/infomons/pdf/NPP_PartnerList_2009.pdf), which has links to many newspapers’ job listings in one place.

## Networking

Networking is a critical part of a successful job search. It is important to utilize all the connections you have, both personal and professional, to help you secure the job opportunity you are seeking.

- Let others know you are looking, give them an idea of what you are interested in and your qualifications, and stay in touch regularly to update them on your search. It is essential to be organized about your networking.

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○ Use the table below to track your contacts:

Name and Contact Information	Date Contacted	Focus of Conversation	Follow-Up Required and Date Completed	Results/Notes

**Your Resumes and Interviews**

All of your efforts to find job opportunities are geared toward the next steps: sending your resume and getting an interview. As you pursue job leads, it is vital to keep track of who you submitted applications to, which employers you need to follow up with, and the outcomes of those contacts.

○ The following table will help you keep track of your job search steps, but also keep an electronic and hard-copy file of the materials you send to potential employers (e.g., cover letter, resume, work samples, etc.).

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## M. PREPARING YOUR RESUME

### Build the Core of Your Resume

Prepare the following information to include in every resume you send out:

#### ○ Contact Information

- Phone number with voice mail \_\_\_\_\_  
(Be sure that the recording presents a positive image of you for a potential employer.)
- E-mail address \_\_\_\_\_  
(If you don't already have one, there are several sites that offer free accounts. Choose an e-mail address that is professional sounding.)

#### ○ Education and Training

Training/Education	Location/School	Date Achieved
Academic certificate earned:	From:	
Degree earned:	From:	
Additional training completed:	At:	
Licenses earned:	At:	
Awards or honors received:	From:	
Merit-based scholarships received:		

#### ○ Work Experience

Position Title, Employer (City/State), Start and End Dates of Employment	Achievements, Special Skills Used, Green Highlights/Connections

#### ○ Professional Affiliations

- List any professional, civic, or social organization memberships, leadership positions, etc. that relate to the targeted industry or green issues.

## Customize Your Resume

You will want to customize your resume for each employer, thus increasing your chances of standing out in the application process. Your goal is to show the employer how your knowledge, credentials, skills, and experience are a perfect fit for both the position and the organization.

- Review each employer's website and publications for the following information:
  - What is the organization's mission? What values are emphasized? What does the organization view as important?
  - What key words does the employer use to talk about its green work? Be sure to use these in the top half of the first page of your resume!
  - Would a functional resume serve you better than a purely chronological resume? Instead of listing your experience by date and job title, a functional resume describes your experience under categories of type of work, such as "customer service" or "management," and focuses on the skills you demonstrated. This kind of resume is often used by those who are switching industries or who have changed jobs frequently. Consult your local One-Stop Career Center for more information on how to prepare this type of resume.
- Review the job announcement and position description:
  - What knowledge is the employer looking for?
  - What skills is the employer looking for?
  - What credentials is the employer looking for?
  - What qualities is the employer looking for?
- Edit your standard resume to focus on the skills and experience this employer is seeking.
- In your cover letter, include a paragraph or two that details how your knowledge, credentials, skills, and experience fit closely with the employer's overall priorities and interests, as well as the specifics of the position.

### Reminders:

- Show your green awareness by printing your resume and cover letter on recycled paper.
- Always have someone else proofread your cover letter and resume.

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## N. PREPARING FOR YOUR INTERVIEW

### Before the Day of the Interview

○ Review the information on the company and the position that you gathered for your customized resume (see worksheet M, “Preparing Your Resume”). Also review the resume and cover letter you sent to the company.

○ Highlight the knowledge, skills, and abilities you described to the employer.

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○ Make a list of general questions that the employer is likely to ask. You can find sources of typical interview questions online. (Example: What is your greatest strength? Do you prefer working independently or on a team?) (Note: You can use this list for all of your interviews.)

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○ Make a list of possible interview questions that are specific to this employer, this position, and/or green issues. (Example: What are some examples of your commitment to the environment in your daily life? Which of our projects would you be most interested in working on and why?)

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○ Jot down two or three questions you want to ask the employer. These should focus on learning more about the way the workplace operates, the most interesting challenges posed by the work, etc. You can also ask about next steps in the interview process. Avoid asking about compensation at a first interview.

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○ Prepare a well-formatted list of references to leave with the employer if asked. These should be from past supervisors or co-workers. Provide the reference’s name, company, title, and contact information. Be sure to contact these individuals in advance to let them know you would like to use them as references. Do not use family or friends as references.

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○ Ask a trusted friend or family member to practice questions with you. Practice until your answers feel comfortable and flow easily.

○ Develop and practice positive answers to negative questions. For example, “Why do you want to leave your current position?” can be answered in terms of seeking new opportunities and career advancement in the emerging green economy.

## **The Day of the Interview**

- Dress neatly and appropriately for the interview and the industry in which you are applying. (Examples: If your interview is for an office job, wear conservative business attire and simple jewelry. If your interview is for a job in construction and will be occurring at a construction site, wear clean and neat pants, shirt and blazer, and sturdy, flat-soled shoes.) You can look online for detailed advice about interview attire.
- Plan your travel so that you are sure to arrive five to 10 minutes early for the interview. Arriving late sets a poor first impression.
- Bring a copy of your references, plus an additional copy of the resume you sent to this employer.
- Ask each interviewer for a business card.

## **After the Interview**

- Consider sending a thank-you note to each interviewer after every interview, within two business days of the interview. Be sure to use the person's correct title and to spell his/her name correctly. (See the business cards you collected during the interview, look on the company's website, or call the reception desk to ask for the information.) It is appropriate to send the thank-you note via either e-mail or regular mail.
- Follow up by e-mailing or calling (within seven to 10 business days, or less if the employer has a short hiring timeline) to show your continued interest in the position.

## 0. ADVANCING YOUR CAREER

Having a green occupation isn't an end in itself. As discussed in this guide, things change quickly in the green economy; new technologies and skill requirements are always evolving. A successful green career requires being ready to meet those new demands and shaping a path that works for you. Answer the following questions to help yourself take steps to build such a career.

- From where you are now, which occupation or step up would you be interested in? What comes after that?
- What are the disadvantages of that next level? What are the advantages?
- What aspects of your current work do you enjoy most? What position gives you the greatest opportunity to do these types of things?
- What new skills can you learn in your field to improve your opportunities for advancement?
- What new experiences do you need in your field to improve your opportunities for advancement?
- How can you learn these skills and gain these experiences? Can you get these on-the-job? At your current job? Will you need to obtain additional credentials?

### Plot Out Your Career Path:

Current Job: _____		Current Employer: _____	
Next Job	What I Need to Do to be Ready	Potential Employers	Timing

Take a look at this planned path regularly and keep track of the steps you have taken to prepare yourself for the next job.

### Tips:

- Talk to others doing the jobs you think you might like to do someday. Ask for advice about what you need to do to move into that occupation.
- Consider your current job performance. How can you improve your performance to make yourself a strong candidate for a promotion?
- Determine whether you will need to change companies to advance. Will you need to relocate?
- Stay up-to-date on the field by reading publications, attending conferences, and networking with others in your profession. Seek out challenging work so you can build new skills.
- Keep a log of your achievements and highlight these in your resume.



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## P. IS ENTREPRENEURSHIP RIGHT FOR ME?

Being in business for yourself can be both rewarding and challenging. Here is a short checklist to help you determine if entrepreneurship is a good fit for you:

- Are you innovative in finding solutions to problems and challenges?
- Do you thrive under pressure?
- Do you recover from setbacks by taking a different approach and trying again?
- Are you willing to take financial risks?
- Can you effectively manage yourself and your time?
- Are you willing to work long, demanding hours?
- Can you work alone for long periods of time?
- Can you create a vision and help others to support that vision?
- Can you motivate others to act?
- Can you trust others to do their jobs?
- Are you willing to sacrifice your free time to deal with the priorities of your business?
- Are you the sort of person who can stay focused on a long-term goal?
- Are you able to secure financial backing/support for your ideas/projects?

If you answered “yes” to most of these questions, entrepreneurship may be right for you. The next step is to find out more about the resources that are available to help you explore your options.

- Make a list of people you know who are successfully self-employed or own a small business. Make an appointment to talk to at least one successful self-employed person and one small business owner about their experiences.

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- Find an introductory entrepreneurship class in your area. The best place to start is the Small Business Development Center (SBDC) in your state. Search online at <http://www.sba.gov> for the “SBDC Locator” and click on your state on the map. Your local SBDC can connect you with workshops, training, and other resources that will help you explore and pursue the creation of a small business.
- Consider the types of classes you will need to take. For instance, you might want to take a business accounting course, a course on developing a business plan, a workshop on licenses and permits, or other business-relevant topics. Make a list of entrepreneurship workshops or classes you want to attend in the next three months:

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If you want to pursue becoming an entrepreneur, refer to Chapter 6, “Green Entrepreneurship,” for further information and next steps.