

What It Takes to be Successful in Today's Workplace



You're headed for a career in a few years—do you know how employers think? The more you understand employers and their opinions about work, the more likely you are to be successful.

Find out how much you know about employment. Answer the questions below. Then locate your knowledge ranking at the bottom of the page.

1. Bosses give all new workers plenty of training for their jobs. ____Yes ____ No
2. If a person chooses a career that requires a high level of technical skill, such as computer science, automotive mechanics, cosmetology, or radiology technology, academics don't matter much. ____Yes ____ No
3. Work readiness is a term that means a person will graduate soon and should start writing a résumé and filling out applications. ____Yes ____ No
4. People with 4-year degrees always make the most money. ____Yes ____ No
5. Bosses give new employees a few weeks to ease themselves into a job instead of expecting them to be productive right from the beginning. ____Yes ____ No
6. Unless a job requires public speaking or report writing, English classes aren't much help when it comes to a career. ____Yes ____ No
7. Having a good work ethic has nothing to do with work readiness. ____Yes ____ No
8. Problem solving at work always has something to do with math. ____Yes ____ No
9. When talking about applying academics to work, employers mean they expect employees to have made good grades in their academic courses. ____Yes ____ No
10. Since a person with only a high school diploma has at least four more years to work than an individual who gets a bachelor's degree, the person with the high school diploma will earn more money in a lifetime. ____Yes ____ No

All answers are false. If you answered all 10 ten questions right, you have an advantage over people who don't understand how employers think.

If you answered 8 or 9 questions right, you're in fairly good shape, but you'll find yourself competing with people who know more about what it takes to be successful.

If you answered 7 questions right, you need to develop your knowledge of the workplace before you look for employment.

If you missed more than 4 answers, it's time to get with your counselor or teacher and become better prepared before you start looking for a job.

See next page for answer feedback.

1. False. Training usually is limited to procedures and processes that are specific only to the hiring company and not to work in general.
2. False. Academics matter in every job, more today than ever before. Employers expect workers to be able to apply what they learned in school to the type of work they do, for example, using math to calculate estimates for customers.
3. False. Work readiness means being prepared for work at the entry level and includes the ability to apply academics to a job, perform technical skills, and show professional behavior and attitudes.
4. False. In terms of pay, getting a bachelor's degree is usually a win over an associate's degree, but some careers that require only 2-year degrees or advanced training without a degree pay more than careers that require 4-year degrees. For example, a master plumber, who usually trains by apprenticing with a master plumber, can earn up to \$102,000, and most master plumbers make at least \$60,000. A radiation therapist normally completes a 2-year degree program in radiation therapy and can make up to \$104,000, and most radiation therapists earn about \$77,000. An executive chef who completes one or two years of training at a community college, technical school or culinary institute can earn up to \$102,000, and most executive chefs earn at least \$45,100. (PayScale/Bureau of Labor Statistics)
5. False. Being able to "hit the ground running" is a term bosses often use to describe what they expect from new employees. This means they should be productive right from the beginning.
6. False. Every job requires English skills, whether it's using good grammar when talking with customers, being able to express yourself appropriately to other employees, or writing a set of instructions for a coworker to follow.
7. False. One of the most important parts of work readiness is having a good work ethic, which includes showing the proper attitude, being trustworthy, taking responsibility, and demonstrating similar personal characteristics.
8. False. Many work problems have nothing to do with math, for example, finding a coworker to fill in when you have an emergency or calming an unhappy customer.
9. False. Good grades in school are meaningful to employers only if a worker is able to apply the skills to work situations. For example, when a maintenance manager at a mall must make a decision about which cleaning products are too toxic to use in customer restrooms, good science grades don't count if the manager chooses the lowest cost product and makes customers sick.
10. False. Most people with bachelor's degrees will make far more money in a lifetime than a person with only a high school diploma. However, as discussed in Statement 4, with additional non-degree training, some careers pay more than 4-year degree careers.

Career Headlines is a complimentary, weekly update on career-related topics from **Career Solutions Publishing**. Visit us at www.careersolutionspublishing.com or call 888-299-2784.

Career Solutions Publishing 1199 Lancaster Avenue Berwyn, Pennsylvania 19312 United States (610) 993-8292