

Develop Your Skills and Promote Yourself Through Unpaid Opportunities *Lesson Plan*

Concept:

Skills and connections can be developed through many types of experiences to support career planning

Student learning associated with this concept can support achievement of provincial learning outcomes:

NB 1, 2, 3

NL 4, 5, 7, 9, 14

NS 2, 4, 7, 10

PEI 2, 3, 5

Rationale:

As students prepare to enter post-secondary education or training programs and the labour market, drawing on the skills and accessing connections they have built will help them feel more confident in making career decisions. Students may not always recognize that they are developing skills through their extracurricular activities, their volunteerism or other community engagement opportunities. In completing and reflecting on their self-assessments, they may have been able to use examples from these unpaid opportunities to validate their skills results. In addition to skill development, unpaid opportunities can also help them develop a network of individuals who can serve as mentors and advisors, directing them to resources that can support their career planning. In this lesson, students will be able to examine how the skills they develop through unpaid opportunities and the connections they make can support their transition into the labour market.

Inquiry Based Question (s) Related to Student Learning:

How can unpaid opportunities impact your career planning?

How can a network of support be developed through unpaid opportunities?

Teachers should register students for a myBlueprint account to support learning associated with this lesson.

Teachers can support student learning through the facilitation of the following lesson on how skills and connections developed through community experiences and unpaid opportunities can support their career planning. The delivery of this lesson may take one to two class periods:

- Teachers can lead students in a discussion on how they can develop their skills through community experiences or unpaid opportunities. Reminding students of skills definitions, their transferability and ways they can be demonstrated in different settings can support them in making a connection between their skills and their experiences. Providing students with examples may help enrich the discussion.
- Students can create a list of community experiences and unpaid opportunities where they have been able to (or could be able to) develop skills. Once the list has been compiled, students can identify skills that can be or have been developed, providing examples of those skills. Questions that can assist students in their brainstorming may include:
 - What tasks or responsibilities did you have when you volunteered or were part of experience/ organization xxxx?
 - What skills helped you complete these tasks/ responsibilities? How did these tasks/ responsibilities help you develop new skills?
 - Were you able to complete these tasks independently or did you need a lot of guidance and direction? How did you show initiative while involved with this organization? What would either of these tell you about yourself and your skills?
- Teachers can lead students in a discussion about who they have interacted with through their community experience or unpaid opportunity. This may require explicit instruction on the value of networking. Some questions that can be considered as part of this discussion:
 - How might individuals working with this organization describe you and why do you think they would describe you this way?
 - How could these individuals be part of your network, providing you with advice on your career planning and how you can present your skills as you move into the labour market?
 - What skills can help you develop your network and why?
- As an extension to their learning, students can choose a company they may be interested in working for and research their social commitment on their website. Suggestions on how this research can be presented as evidence of learning have been included below.
- Students can also create a service learning project that addresses a need in their school or community to further demonstrate their understanding of how skills can be developed through unpaid opportunities.

Suggestions for Evidence of Learning and Assessment:

- Students can include a journal entry in their labour market/ career portfolio on the significance of the skills that can be developed through community

experiences and unpaid opportunities in preparing them for post-secondary education or training programs and for entry into the labour market.

- Students can include their company research in their labour market/ career portfolio and their synopsis of the company's social commitment. Students can hypothesize what this means in terms of the types of employees the company is looking to hire and retain. Students can include commentary on how they would fit with this company.
- Students can create a concept map of community organizations they have been involved with (or could be involved with) and the types of skills they have developed (or could develop) as a result of that involvement. Students can upload their map to their labour market/ career portfolio and include a reflection on how their involvement could strengthen their skills, help them build a network and make them more marketable when they enter the labour market.
- Students can create a bank of contacts who could be part of their network and assist them with their career planning; this can be uploaded to their labour market/ career portfolio.
- Students can upload their service learning project plan and documentation of their role in the project as evidence of their contribution to the project understanding of skill development through community experiences and unpaid opportunities.

Teachers can access resources to support delivery of this lesson in the Resources/ Teaching Strategy Folder.

This lesson presents an opportunity for teachers to collaborate in supporting student learning about the role of self-assessments in career planning. In addition to Career Education courses, teachers can consider how students are able to meet cross curricular learning outcomes in other courses such as English/ French Language Arts, Multimedia, Social Studies etc. This cross curricular approach also supports a unified approach in addressing the “why” of what they are learning. Students can develop an awareness of how and why what they are learning connects to them, their community and their future.