

Florida Works

***Career-Building Skills for
Adult Basic Education***

Book A

***Planning the Work
of a Lifetime***



Dedication

*Florida Human Resources Development, Inc. and the Florida Department of Education dedicate the **Florida Works** Workforce Readiness Project to the thousands of adult learners who have the motivation and energy to continue along the path of life-long learning, thereby enriching not only their own lives, but also the lives of their families and the nation as a whole. This curriculum is also dedicated to the thousands of practitioners who give unselfishly of their time and efforts to help their students' dreams come true.*

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Florida Human Resources Development, Inc. The Executive Director, Ron Froman, founded this nonprofit organization to promote the development of human resources among youth and adults relative to economic development in Florida, and to collaboratively deliver programs and activities appropriate to the enhancement of the state's workforce development system.

For more information about Florida Human Resources Development, Inc., call Ron Froman at 407-699-9622.

Acknowledgements



Florida Human Resources Development, Inc. acknowledges the valuable contributions of several groups and individuals whose collaboration and support brought the **Florida Works** Project to fruition.

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Our admiration and thanks go to the **Florida Works** Project Team, whose members contributed countless hours designing, discussing, and analyzing drafts. Tony Lagos conceived and initiated the project. Marilyn Gillespie, Lead Curriculum Designer and Writer, expertly combined focus group ideas, curriculum frameworks, and current research into a logical and user-friendly document. Erin Sologaitoa spent many hours coordinating field-testing, tabulating field-test data, and communicating results with the project team. Barbara Salazar, Judy Jameson, Judd Butler, and Keisha Lyles were wonderful partners, who willingly accepted and completed any and all tasks required to keep the project moving. Last, but not least, Kathy Kinsley-Momberger, Lead Graphic Designer, and Melda Howell and Patricia McGhee used their artistic and editorial talents to give **Florida Works** the professional look it deserves.

For the opportunity to interact with this competent team of professionals on an engaging project, we are extremely grateful.

Ron Froman
Executive Director, Florida Human Resources Development, Inc.

Teri McLean
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Project Coordinator

Florida Works

Book A – Planning the Work of a Lifetime

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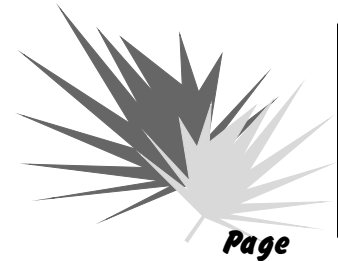


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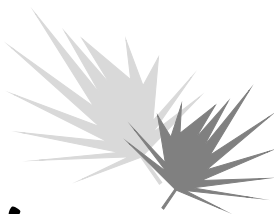
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To the Teacher...



What Is Florida Works?

*Working in **Florida Works** groups let me work with people and their thoughts and ideas which were sometimes different from mine. We solved problems, completed forms and projects together. I learned a lot about working with others. This will help me when I get a job.*

*Robin Schechter
Wingate Oaks Program
Ft. Lauderdale*

Florida Works is a new kind of career building curriculum. It is designed to help adult basic education students to gain the skills and confidence they need to get a job and succeed at it. The curriculum has been field tested with students around Florida including adults in ABE/GED programs, WAGES participants, participants in family literacy programs, incarcerated adults and adults with disabilities.

In the field testing, we found there is no “typical” adult education student in Florida. Teachers must adapt any curriculum to the diverse needs of their adult learners.

Florida Works was designed for students at the Intermediate Literacy Level (pre-GED or 4-6 level). But teachers found that students at the higher end of the Initial Literacy Level (2.0-3.9) could participate in the program if they were paired with students reading at a higher level. Students at the GED level and higher level ESL students also used the program successfully.

Florida Works was developed to be as adaptable as possible. It can be used as a stand-alone curriculum or can be taught concurrently with an academic skills or on the job training course. It can be taught as an intensive program or spread out over a semester. The entire course consists of a three book series with a Certificate of Completion at the end. Each book can also be taught separately. There is a certificate of completion which can be awarded for each book. Or, activities can be “mixed and matched” to suit your learners’ needs. If all three books are completed, the course will satisfy the requirements of the Florida Department of Education Workplace Readiness Skills Course for the Adult Basic Education Funding.

What Is Different About Florida Works?

I'm a quiet person. I don't talk much but there's a lot of stuff in here that relates to me. This class opens me up. It builds a trust.

*Sandra Wilburn
Participant, Even Start Program
Blountstown, Florida*

Florida Works is based on the idea that students own lives are the real curriculum. What they need most is a structure through which to learn from their own experiences and from their classmates. They need immediate applications for the new skills they learn in their job hunting process.

In **Florida Works** students are responsible for their own learning. There is no teacher's guide. Students read and follow the instructions themselves to work as a class, in small "home teams" and on their own. **Florida Works** uses a blend of learner-centered techniques and processes including problem posing, cooperative learning, role play, simulations, journal writing and learner-centered assessment to help students to open up and share their experiences. Although this approach is new for many students, many surprise even themselves by their positive response.

The group activities allowed the group to open up and become accustomed to dealing with people.

Here's how students from the field test sites evaluated their experiences:

It was a great idea and great experience being able to communicate with people.

I felt they were beneficial because I had other people my age to help out.

The group activities gave us a sense of shared purpose. It taught us how to interact and stimulated our minds.

The focus of the program is on getting a job and on acquiring the kinds of employability skills recommended by the Secretary's Committee on Achieving Necessary Skills (SCANS). We believe students cannot learn to achieve the SCANS just by reading about them. They require repeated experience working in groups. To accomplish this, students need an environment where they can safely reflect on their personal experiences, name and analyze their goals and beliefs, simulate workplace behavior, and plan actions to take outside the classroom

What Is My Role as a Teacher?



I thought, “How am I going to use this with a group of people that may be employed or not, that may be able to read or not?” But this is a self-learning tool. It gives students responsibility for their own learning. You don’t need a teacher’s book. Everything is in the student book. All you have to do is find one person who is comfortable reading out loud to get started.

*Lavaine Mayo
Family Literacy/
Adult Education Coordinator
Literacy Volunteers of Calhoun County*

Many of the teachers at our field test sites approached **Florida Works** with an attitude of cautious optimism. They liked the idea of having students work in groups. It made sense, but they were skeptical about whether their students could work together in this way. Yet as the program progressed, they saw that their students were willing and eager to work with one another. “It has been a bonding experience. A lot of exercises have created an atmosphere where we can build trust,” said Joanne Clark of the Leon County Even Start Family Literacy Program. “Students enjoy activities that help unlock the mysteries of who they are,” remarked Pam Davis, Instructor at the Brevard Correctional Institution.

For most teachers, the most difficult challenge is to move from being a lecturer

to a facilitator of learning. Although there are times when you may want to use the material to give a short, mini-lesson, more often your job will be to move from table to table clarifying instructions and making sure the group work moves smoothly. In large group activities your role is to build a spirit of trust where learners feel safe enough to share their feelings. Often you may have to struggle not to jump in and “give the answers” but rather to wait in silence briefly until students begin to volunteer their own answers. Field tester Lavaine Mayo describes her experience this way:

I had to struggle not to lead the group, not to make it a lecture. I struggled not to try to do everything but instead to let the students do as much as possible. Now it’s so that if I were sick or anything like that the group could carry on without me.

*Lavaine Mayo
Family Literacy/
Adult Education Coordinator
Literacy Volunteers of Calhoun County*

For **Florida Works** to work best, you need a space where students can move easily between working in teams at small tables to working in large groups with their chairs placed in a circle.

Why Is Book A Important?

To the writers of this series, Book A is the most important book of all. It lays the foundation for developing the personal insight to make a career plan. It is in this book that adult learners analyze the meaning of work in their lives. They learn how to identify their accomplishments, their best personal qualities and the transferable skills they possess and then match those skills and interests to actual jobs. The stress is on identifying a job they might be able to get right now. However, students are also encouraged to begin to think about how they can make a long range plan that will allow them to get a job that pays a better wage. Although for many students this will be a long range proposition, Book A helps plant the seed by encouraging a process of goal setting over time.

Book B will build on these skills by helping adults with the actual job search. They will learn the best ways to look for job openings, how to apply for the job, and how to succeed at a job interview.

Book C deals with issues adults will face once they land the job. They will learn what it takes to get off on the right foot in a new job. They will learn how to make the most of their pay and benefits. And, they will consider what they need to think about to be ready for their next job.

Where Can I Learn More?

The ***Florida Works*** teacher training workshop will provide you with much more detailed information about the ***Florida Works*** approach to teaching, learning, and performance-based assessment. It will also have ideas for where to go for additional resources. The teacher training workshop materials contain additional tools you may want to use. We recommend that you use the **Initial Interview** and **Learning Contract** (or ones you develop yourself) to help you to get to know the needs of the learner and to make sure they are ready to make a commitment to the program. The workshop will also tell you more about how to use the **Performance Checklists** and how to make substitutions to better meet your students' needs.

To the Learner...



What Is Florida Works?

Do you need a job? Do you have a job but would like a better one? Is this your first time looking for a job? Have you had jobs before but still don't know what job would be best for you? If you answered yes to any of these questions, **Florida Works** is for you.

Here's what adults who have used **Florida Works** have to say:

The book is putting in perspective a person's life. When we go through the activities we see that we're not alone.

*Phyllis Cauley
Participant and Volunteer Facilitator
Even Start Program
Blountstown*

Working in Florida Works groups let me work with people and their thoughts and ideas which were sometimes different from mine. We solved problems and completed forms and projects together. I learned a lot about working with others. This will help me when I get a job.

*Robin Schechter
Wingate Oaks Program
Ft. Lauderdale*

I've never experienced a job, but now I feel like I'm educated well enough to seek one.

*Luis Renique
Brevard Correctional Institution*

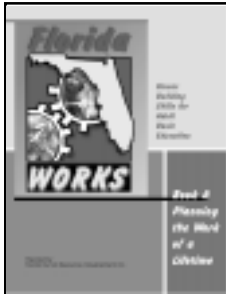
A lot of people feel like they can't get a job but if they read this here book, they know they can start over. They don't have to go back to the street. I realized that no matter who you are you can end up with a good job.

*Sharonna Davis
Brevard Correctional Institution*

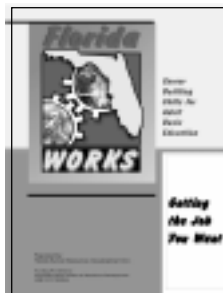
Florida Works was written to help adults to make the best of their skills and life experiences. It will help you to find out the kind of job that will bring out your best skills and talents. Then it will show you how to go after that job.

As you go through the program you may also learn that to get a higher skilled job that pays a good wage, you may need further education. **Florida Works** will show you how to break your educational goals down into small steps so that, in the long run, you will reach your goal.

Florida Works has three books



Book A: Planning the Work of a Lifetime

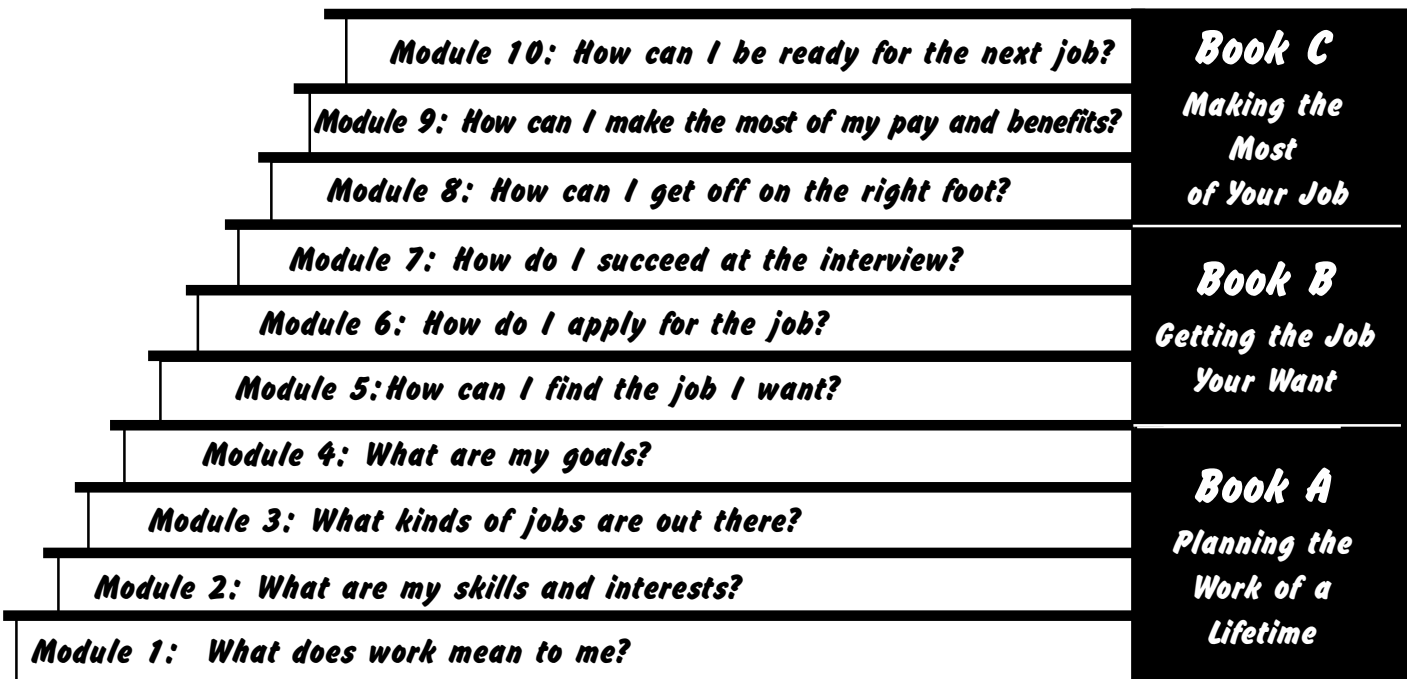


Book B: Getting the Job You Want

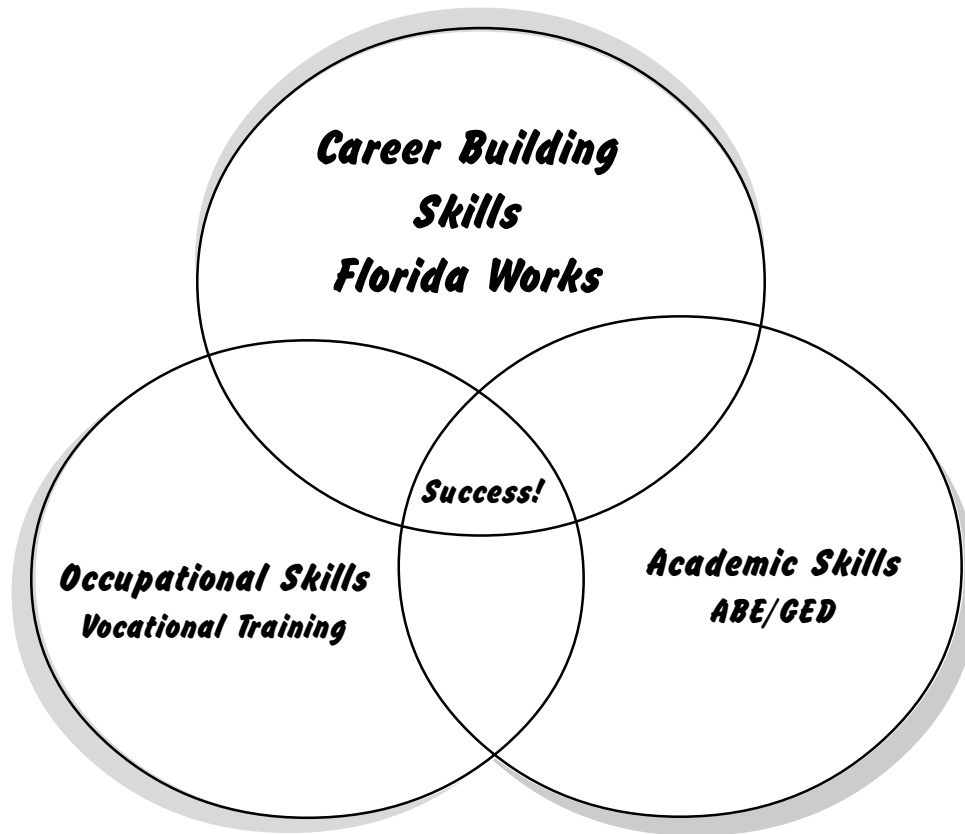


Book C: Making the Most of Your Job

In the books you will move through 10 modules that build on each other. They take you through the steps for finding the best possible job for you.



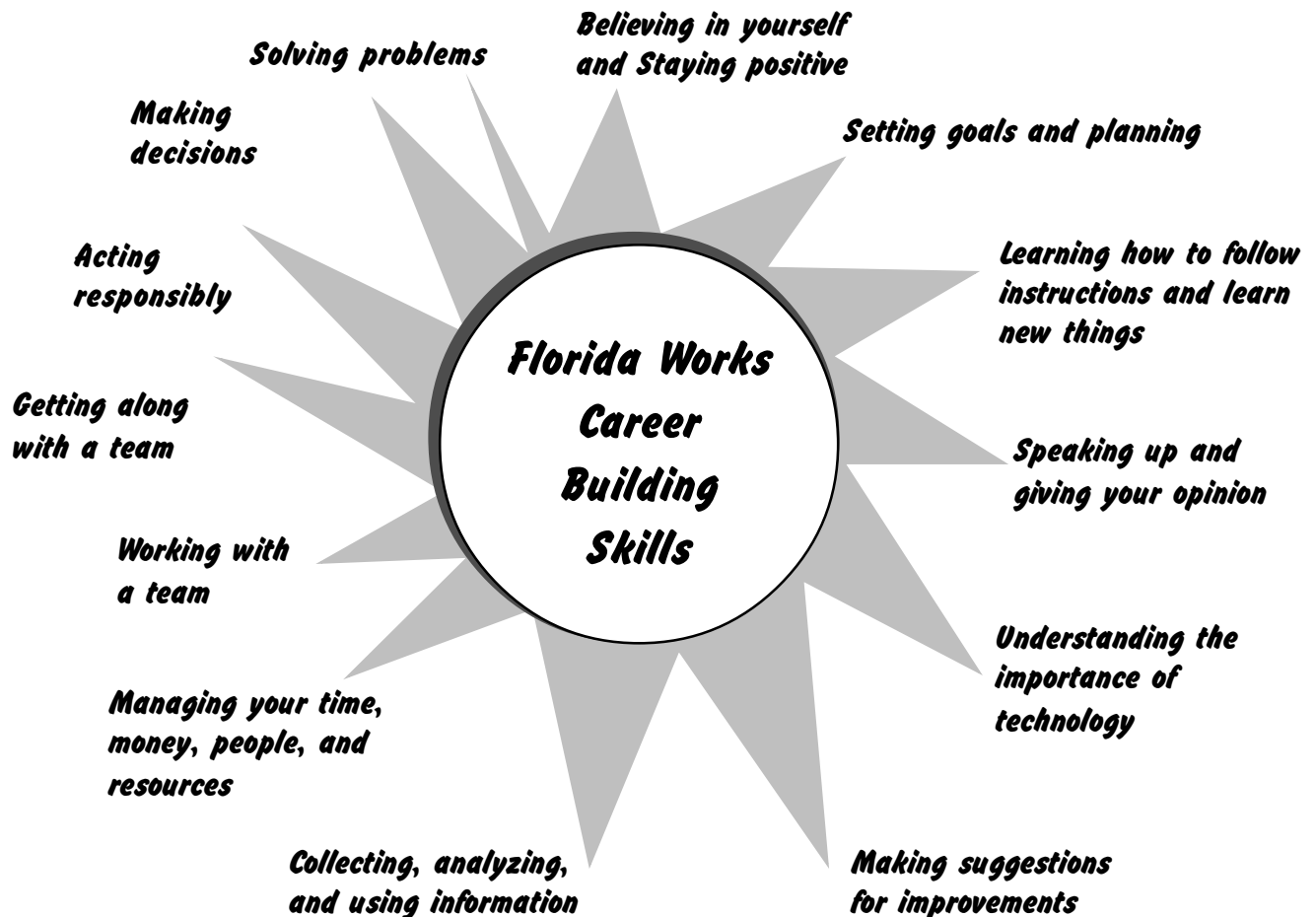
Florida Works is not like a regular Adult Basic Education class. Its focus is not on academic skills like reading, writing, or getting a GED. It is also not like a vocational training class. Its focus is not to teach you a specific occupation. Its focus is on learning what are called **career building skills**.



Career building skills improve your ability to be employed and to succeed on the job. They teach you what employers look for.

Florida Works is not like many courses you may have taken. The focus is on working with others because you can't learn many of the most important career building skills just by reading about them. You have to have the experience of using them with others. The focus is on your life because to find the job that is right for you, you need time to reflect on your past and future.

The list below shows you some of the most important career building skills you will learn.



Here's what other learners say about learning these skills.

This book makes you stop and think and take a personal inventory. It makes you a better person to realize you have strengths and weaknesses."

*Sandra Wilburn
Participant, Even Start Program
Blountstown, Florida*

The big part of nervousness comes from not knowing what to expect. Once you know what to expect, the fear will go away.

*Holland Miller
Cross City Correctional Institution*

What Is in Each Module?

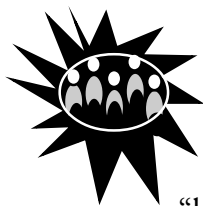
There are six key sections in each *Florida Works* module. They build on each other to give you many ways to develop new knowledge, attitudes, and skills.

Teamwork allows you and your team members to learn from the experiences of each other.

How is Florida Works Different?

In *Florida Works*, you will work and learn together in many different ways. Sometimes you will learn the “traditional” way: by listening while the teacher explains something new. But more often you will work in teams. Teamwork allows you and your team members to learn from the experiences of each other. It gives you a greater chance to speak up and give your opinion and to get “hands-on” practice.

In front of each activity you will see a symbol like the ones below. They tell you what kind of grouping we suggest that you use with the activity. Below is a list of the different symbols and what they mean.



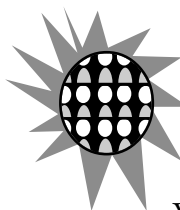
Teamwork. When you see this symbol you will know you will work in teams. Usually you will work in teams of four called “home teams.” You’ll learn more about how teams work in Module 1.



Pairs work. This symbol tells you to choose a partner to work with.



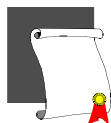
Read and learn. This symbol is used when new information is introduced. Often your teacher may do a short “mini-lesson” to help you learn the information. Or, you may choose to ask a volunteer to read the information out loud. After the mini-lesson or reading you will usually go back into groups to apply what you learned.



Large group work. When you see this symbol, you will know the class will be getting back together as a large group. You may be reporting back to the class about what you did in your teams. Or you may be discussing a topic and giving your opinion.

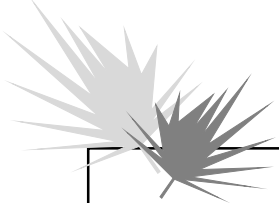


On your own. This symbol tells you that you will be working on the activity on your own. Usually you don’t have to work completely on your own. You can ask classmates or your teacher to help. Often when you are finished you will be asked to “report back” to your team about what you did and how it went.



Employment Portfolio. This symbol tells you to include the activity in your employment portfolio.

Although working in groups may be a little uncomfortable at first, many students who have used **Florida Works** found they liked it more than they expected.



*I like the way we did it in a group and the way we got to express our ability to the **Florida Works** curriculum.*

*Anonymous
Florida Works Student*

I learned that working in a group can be so much fun. Sharing ideas, role plays, and learning from each other. It's just like on the job training!

*Anonymous
Florida Works Student*

Other students find sharing with the group gave them the courage to try something new.

I used to be afraid to fill out forms because I didn't know what they were asking for. Now that I have filled out forms with my teacher and with my group, I feel more comfortable. They are fun!

*Dorothy Guinn
Wingate Oaks Program
Ft. Lauderdale*

How Do I Know I Am Making Progress?

Built into ***Florida Works*** is a way to measure progress called Performance-Based Assessment. **Performance-Based Assessment** is a kind of testing that requires you to do something in order to demonstrate what you have learned. For example, instead of answering a multiple choice test about goal-setting you will create a chart naming your own goals. Instead of answering true-false questions about telephoning an employer, you will role play a phone interview!

At the end of most activities you will see a **Performance Checkpoint**.

You will then complete a project, do a role play, or answer questions to show what you have learned.

At the end of each module, you and your teacher will go over the checkpoints you have completed and fill in a **Performance Checklist** for that module.



Once you have completed all the Performance Checklists for Book A, you will receive a Certificate of Completion. This certificate will show that you have completed the first part of the **Florida Works** Program. When you complete all three

books you will receive a **Florida Works** Certificate. You can show the certificate to employers and vocational programs to demonstrate that you have successfully completed the program. It seems like a lot, but step by step, you will complete each item on the list.


Sample Certificate of Completion

The Florida Department of Education
Awards this

Florida Works
Certificate of Accomplishment
Completion of Book A

to:

Awarded at: _____ On _____



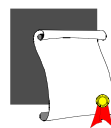
Florida Works Instructor

What Is an Employment Portfolio?

As you go through *Florida Works*, you will also build an Employment Portfolio. The purpose of an Employment Portfolio is to help you collect information you will need for your job search. Little by little, you will add work you have done to the portfolio, such as:

- a personal data sheet to copy when you fill out job applications,
- a “script” for what to say when you call about a job,
- a short description of your skills and best personal qualities—so when an employer asks you’ll know exactly what to say,
- a list of all the people you have talked to and places you have visited in your job search.

Your Employment Portfolio will be useful to you long after you complete the program. Read it over when you get stuck to remind yourself of your goals. Review it to help you remember what to say at a job interview. Copy information from it onto job applications. Take it with you to an interview. It will show an employer the work you have put into planning your job search.



When you see this symbol, you will know that we suggest you put a copy of this activity in your Employment Portfolio.

How Do I Get Started?

Most people find deciding on the right kind of job and hunting for a job very difficult and stressful. That's why so many people just "fall into" jobs. They don't make the effort to find out what they would most like to do and what they do well.

Florida Works can help you do just that—find the job that is right for you, but it will take effort. Here's some more advice from adult learners who have used ***Florida Works***.

I would like to share with them having a positive attitude can take them a long way and don't be scared to try.

*Anonymous
Florida Works Student*

There's always a chance for everyone.

*Anonymous
Florida Works Student*

Florida Works is a progressive step to take if you are serious about your education and your work

*Anonymous
Florida Works Student*

