



LEADERSHIP EDUCATION 300 LIFE SKILLS & CAREER OPPORTUNITIES

Second Edition



PEARSON

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Preface

Life Skills and Career Opportunities provides an essential component of leadership education for today's high school students. This book, and the course it is designed for, will prepare you for life after high school in the high-tech, globally oriented, and diverse workplace of the 21st century.

Through reading, discussing, and practical exercises, you will become a more confident financial planner. You will understand how to save, invest, and spend money wisely, as well as how to avoid the credit trap. You will learn about real-life issues such as understanding contracts, leases, warranties, legal notices, and personal bills. For students who may be moving into an apartment of their own, you'll learn practical and money-saving strategies for grocery shopping, apartment selection, and life with roommates.

You will also discover who you can become by investigating who you are. The Holland Interest Inventory and other self-assessments will help you to reveal your attitudes, aptitudes, and personal skills. This self-understanding will allow you to explore career paths and understand requirements that you'll need to be successful at work and in life.

To help you increase your potential for success through education, you will learn how to select a school that is right for you. You'll understand how to apply for admission to a vocational or technical school, community college, or college/university, and how to succeed—and enjoy yourself—in these learning environments.

Information is provided on how to conduct the job search for students who wish to enter the workforce right after high school or after additional education and training. You will learn how to prepare a winning résumé, and how to develop effective interviewing skills. You'll become more skilled at using the Internet for career research and learn how to network safely using social media. For those who are interested in a career in the military, the federal government, or in aerospace, the text provides extensive and current information. Finally, you'll consider the most important elements of life skills for all Americans: civic responsibilities, such as volunteering, registering to vote, jury duty, and draft registration.

All chapters and lessons contain full-color diagrams and pictures, providing visual information to supplement the text. Other features in each lesson include a “Quick Write” exercise for in-class writing activities at the start of each lesson. A “Learn About” box tells students what they should learn and take away from the lesson. A list of vocabulary words ensures that students will understand the terms they encounter throughout the text.

At selected points in each lesson, “Success Tips” highlight specific information that will be useful, including stories from people who have been successful using this information. Each lesson is followed by “Checkpoints” which will allow students to review what they have learned. An “Applying Your Learning” section at the end of each lesson presents one or more discussion questions that give students a chance to use and reinforce what they have learned.

The text has eight chapters, each divided into multiple lessons.

Chapter 1: Charting Your Financial Course explains important concepts in building financial stability and wealth. You will learn how to make a plan for earning money, saving it, and spending it. A personal financial plan can be the difference between the ability to do the things each of us wants and the feeling that you’ll never reach your financial goals in life. This chapter will provide you with an overall picture of how to create a budget before the text moves on to examine the specifics of savings, bank accounts, and the real-life issues you will face when buying and selling.

Chapter 2: Managing Your Resources explains the types of credit and discusses positive and negative aspects of using credit, along with monitoring credit to build a positive credit history. By evaluating the types of insurance options available to protect resources, you will learn the importance of insurance and tips for protecting your personal and financial information.

Chapter 3: Career Opportunities examines career opportunities each of you may pursue. It is designed to provide you with an overview of the high-tech, globally oriented, and diverse 21st-century workplace. The chapter discusses the importance of charting a career path, comparing career options, and evaluating key factors when choosing a career path. You will explore who you are by examining your own interests, values, attitudes, and abilities. Your self-discovery will help you choose careers based on you as a unique individual, and help you consider which work environments are best suited for your personal preferences. Finally, you will analyze different career paths available to you immediately after high school graduation or post-secondary vocational training or college education. By linking technical and educational career paths in this chapter, the intent is to communicate that both choices are worthwhile options.

Chapter 4: Aiming Towards a College Degree focuses on selecting and applying for college. You will examine the financial costs of attending college, explore sources of funding, and learn about the criteria, or standards, all students should consider when choosing a college. This chapter also covers college entrance exams and college placement tests; how to write an application essay; how to prepare for an admissions interview; and what to look for during a campus visit.

Chapter 5: Charting Your Course examines aspects of preparing to attend college and charting your course of study. You will explore aspects of campus life, including resources, organizations, and policies. You will also cover ways to ensure success in the college environment, including how to make healthy choices. You will take the information you learned about yourself from Chapter 3 and examine the decision process for choosing a college major. This chapter will also explain the importance of effective time management and how you can avoid procrastination.

Chapter 6: Applying for Jobs evaluates the process of successfully pursuing a desired career. By examining what employers are looking for, you, the career seeker, will be employing the most effective tool needed to sell your skills. You will learn how to organize the job search. You will also consider different résumé types, and be able to prepare a persuasive cover letter and résumé. You will learn about different types of interviews, how an interview is conducted, and effective tips for interview preparation.

Chapter 7: Working for the Federal Government evaluates the benefits of working for the federal government. This chapter provides you with the requirements needed to enlist in the military or to enter as a member of the officer corps. The text also compares educational opportunities for enlisted members from each military service, making military service a career option, and how military training is useful when seeking a civilian career. You will examine educational requirements for careers in aerospace and explore specific career examples in aerospace. Finally, this chapter will provide information for selection and training in careers in criminal justice, fire science, and homeland security.

Chapter 8: Developing Your Career Skills will help you create a plan for successful career development. Students will summarize the process of successfully planning for professional development in the workplace. You will learn to create a professional portfolio, organize personal and organizational values, and maintain effective verbal and nonverbal communication. You will learn how to seek and receive constructive feedback and identify successful tips for earning a promotion. Finally, Chapter 8 will cover civic responsibilities. You will review the Selective Draft system, why it is important to vote, work as a volunteer, and be a productive member in your community.

At the end of the textbook, you will find a glossary defining all the vocabulary words and telling you which page each term appears on. You'll also find an index organized by subject at the end of the text, as well as a list of references.

This textbook has been prepared especially for you, the cadet, the student—to increase your knowledge and appreciation of the skills you'll need to be successful once you have graduated from high school. Students like you are our nation's first responders, teachers, engineers, technicians, corporate leaders: the workforce of the future. The future is in your hands. Are you ready to take up the challenge? Every one of us involved in the production of this book hopes it will prepare you for future challenges.

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Acknowledgments

This new edition of *Life Skills and Career Opportunities* is based in part on suggestions from AFJROTC instructors on meeting the need to update the tools young adults require to succeed in the 21st century. The Jeanne M. Holm Center for Officer Accessions and Citizen Development (Holm Center) Curriculum Directorate team involved in the production effort was under the direction of Dr. Charles Nath III, Ed.D., Director of Curriculum for the Holm Center at Maxwell Air Force Base, Alabama, and Ms. Vickie Helms, M.Ed., Chief, AFJROTC Curriculum. Special thanks and acknowledgment go to Mr. Michael Wetzel, M.Ed., an instructional systems specialist and Academic Credit Liaison for Holm Center Curriculum, who was the primary Air Force editor and reviewer. We commend Michael for his persistent efforts, commitment, and thorough review in producing the best academic materials possible for AFJROTC units worldwide.

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The AFJROTC mission is to develop citizens of character dedicated to serving their nation and communities. Our goal is to create materials that provide a solid foundation for producing members of society able to productively fulfill their citizenship roles. We believe this course will continue the precedent set forth by previous curriculum materials. All the people identified above came together on this project and combined their efforts to form one great team, providing 21st Century curriculum materials to all our schools.