

Careers in Consumerism

Unit: Career Exploration Skills

Problem Area: Explore Family and Consumer Sciences Careers

Lesson: Careers in Consumerism

■ **Student Learning Objectives.** Instruction in this lesson should result in students achieving the following objectives:

- 1 Describe the consumer-skills field.**
- 2 Identify careers in the consumer-skills field.**
- 3 Investigate careers in the consumer-skills field.**

■ **List of Resources.** The following resources may be useful in teaching this lesson:

“Family Resource Management,” *Family and Consumer Sciences*. Accessed Dec. 2, 2007 <<http://www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs/resource.html>>.

“Job Smart: Career Guides,” *Kathy Schrock’s Guide for Educators*. Accessed Dec. 2, 2007 <<http://school.discoveryeducation.com/schrockguide/vocation.html>>.

“Occupations,” *U.S. Department of Labor: Bureau of Statistics*. Accessed Dec. 2, 2007 <www.bls.gov>.



■ List of Equipment, Tools, Supplies, and Facilities

- ✓ Overhead or PowerPoint projector
- ✓ Visual(s) from accompanying master(s)
- ✓ Copies of sample test, lab sheet(s), and/or other items designed for duplication
- ✓ Materials listed on duplicated items
- ✓ Computers with printers and Internet access
- ✓ Classroom resource and reference materials

■ Terms. The following terms are presented in this lesson (shown in bold italics):

- ▶ consumer advocate
- ▶ consumer reporters
- ▶ consumer-skills field
- ▶ credit counselors
- ▶ customer-service representative
- ▶ product demonstrators

■ Interest Approach. Use an interest approach that will prepare the students for the lesson. Teachers often develop approaches for their unique class and student situation. A possible approach is included here.

Ask students what a consumer is and how consumers may need help, which can lead into a discussion of this topic.

SUMMARY OF CONTENT AND TEACHING STRATEGIES

Objective 1: Describe the consumer-skills field.

Anticipated Problem: What is the consumer-skills field?

- I. The ***consumer-skills field*** involves assisting customers to representing product lines to developing market plans for major industries.
 - A. A career path of study may include business structure, global perspectives and outlook, consumer rights and responsibilities, computer applications, and customer relations.

- B. Three levels of careers exist in this field.
1. Entry-level careers start after high school with little or no training.
 - a. **Customer-service representatives** help customers with questions and concerns.
 - b. **Product demonstrators** distribute samples, products, or coupons.
 - c. **Consumer reporters** write articles about consumer concerns.
 2. Technical-level careers require some post-secondary training.
 - a. **Credit counselors** advise consumers on credit matters.
 - b. Food-product testers receive products to test for companies.
 - c. Public-relations representatives advocate for business or non-profit groups to build positive relationships with the public.
 3. Professional-level careers require college, university, or a post-graduate degree.
 - a. Financial planners help the public make investments and financial decisions.
 - b. Product research and development employees conduct research and develop new products or refine existing ones.
 - c. **Consumer advocates** represent consumers in dealing with various problems.
- C. The need for educated and informed consumer specialists has increased significantly.
1. The increased interest in energy efficiency and other environmental issues will affect not only the manner in which products are developed and made, but also the manner in which they are promoted and offered to the public.
 2. Hot employment areas in this field include research and development for “niche” markets (e.g., seniors and baby boomers) and industry globalization, which allows entry into foreign markets.
 3. Employment of product managers, category managers, and logistic engineers should also increase during the next 10 years.

Many techniques can be used to help students master this objective. Use the provided PowerPoint.

Objective 2: Identify careers in the consumer-skills field.

Anticipated Problem: What are careers in the consumer-skills field?

- II. There are three levels of careers in this field.
- A. Entry-level careers include consumer-assistant technician, customer-service representative, product demonstrator, consumer reporter, personal shopper, and residential-energy auditor.

- B. Technical-level careers include credit counselor, food products/consumer tester, product representative, public-relations representative, commercial-energy auditor, and consumer-news writer.
- C. Professional-level careers include director of consumer affairs, financial planner, product research and development, consumer advocate/arbitrator, consumer newscaster/editor, and energy-efficiency specialist.
 - 1. Students in this field learn employment and management skills for careers in consumer communications; energy, environment, and resource management; product development, testing, and demonstration; personal and family financial management; and personal services.
 - 2. Occupation-specific curriculum includes research; advertising and public consumer relations; energy efficiency, waste management, and consumer programs; product information; testing procedures, labeling, and demonstration techniques; economics and personal finance; consumer credit; and selection of product merchandise and services.

Many techniques can be used to help students master this objective.

Objective 3: Investigate careers in the consumer-skills field.

Anticipated Problem: What is information about a specific career in the consumer-skills field?

- III. Research a chosen career from this field to answer specific questions.
 - A. Determine specific training or education needed for this career.
 - B. Discover the expected earnings for this career.
 - C. Find the expected job prospects for this career.
 - D. Determine what workers do on the job for this career.
 - E. Discover the working conditions for this career.
 - F. List any related occupations for this career.

Many techniques can be used to help students master this objective. Students will choose specific careers to investigate further on the Internet. An oral and written report will be submitted for grading.

Review/Summary. Use the student learning objectives to summarize the lesson. Have students explain the content associated with each objective. Student responses can be used in determining which objectives need to be reviewed or taught from a different angle. Questions at the ends of chapters in the textbook may also be used in the review/summary.

- **Application.** Use the included visual masters and lab sheet to apply the information presented in the lesson.
- **Evaluation.** Evaluation should focus on student achievement of the objectives for the lesson. Various techniques can be used, such as student performance on the application activities. A sample written test is provided.

■ **Answers to Sample Test:**

Part One: Matching

1. c
2. e
3. d
4. f
5. b
6. a

Part Two: Short Answer

1. Answers may include customer-service representative, consumer advocate, credit counselor, product demonstrator, and consumer reporter.
2. Entry-level, technical, and professional

Part Three: Completion

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Careers in Consumerism

► Part One: Matching

Instructions: Match the term with the correct definition.

- a. consumer advocate
- b. credit counselor
- c. consumer-skills field
- d. product demonstrator
- e. customer-service representative
- f. consumer reporter

- ___ 1. Assists customers, represents product lines, and develops marketing plans for industry
- ___ 2. Helps customers with problems and concerns
- ___ 3. Gives samples of products or coupons
- ___ 4. Writes articles regarding consumer concerns
- ___ 5. Advises consumers on credit matters
- ___ 6. Represents consumers in dealing with problems

► Part Two: Short Answer

Instructions: Complete the following.

- 1. Name three careers from the consumer-skills field.



2. Name three levels of consumer-skills careers.

► **Part Three: Completion**

Instructions: Provide the word or words to complete the following statement.

Employment of program managers, category managers, and longtime engineers should _____ during the next 10 years.

LEVELS OF CONSUMER-SKILLS CAREERS

- ◆ Entry-level (after high school)
- ◆ Technical (post-secondary education)
- ◆ Professional (college/university/post-graduate)



CAREERS IN THE CONSUMER-SKILLS FIELD

Entry-Level

- ◆ Consumer-Assistant Technician
- ◆ Customer-Service Representative
- ◆ Product Demonstrator
- ◆ Consumer Reporter
- ◆ Personal Shopper
- ◆ Residential-Energy Auditor

Technical

- ◆ Credit Counselor
- ◆ Food Products/Consumer Tester
- ◆ Product Representative
- ◆ Public-Relations Representative
- ◆ Commercial-Energy Auditor
- ◆ Consumer-News Writer

Professional

- ◆ Director of Consumer Affairs
- ◆ Financial Planner
- ◆ Product Research and Development
- ◆ Consumer Advocate/Arbitrator
- ◆ Consumer Newscaster/Editor
- ◆ Energy-Efficiency Specialist

Career Investigation Report

Purpose

The purpose of this activity is to investigate a career in the consumer-skills field.

Objectives

1. Investigate a career from the consumer-skills field.
2. Conduct Internet research to answer the questions below.

Materials

- ◆ lab sheet
- ◆ writing utensil
- ◆ computers with Internet access

Procedure

1. Do research on the chosen career.
2. Complete the forms for both reports: written and oral.

Career chosen:

Training and education needed:



Earnings:

Expected job prospects:

What workers do on the job:

Working conditions:

Related occupations: