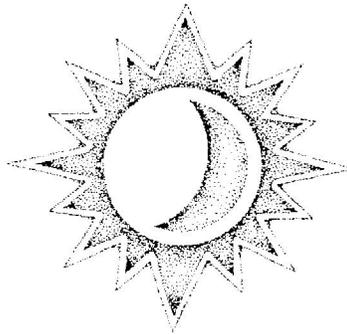


# 30 Ways to Shine as a New Employee

*Supplemental Guide for Agency Use*



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## **PURPOSE**

30 Ways to Shine is a work-based skill development program designed for new employees with the purpose of increasing job retention by promoting effective workplace habits, attitudes and choices. The ultimate goal of this program is not merely to encourage job maintenance, but to foster in the new employee a feeling of personal power, desire and responsibility leading towards job satisfaction and ongoing career development.

## **New Realities Presenting Urgency of and Challenges to Job Retention**

In the past 20 years, I have witnessed the focus of employment and training programs change from "job training" (Let's just get them some skills!) to "job placement" (Let's just get them a job!) to "job retention" (Let's just get them.... ???) Unlike job training and job placement we cannot "get" people job retention. Job maintenance and career development is fought and earned by the employee him/herself and cannot be promised or guaranteed by a program or agency.

This is a hard reality to grapple with in the day of welfare reform and other programs touting "personal responsibility" as the panacea for dependence on social assistance. Enabling people to become self-sufficient and independent of the system is a noble and worthy goal. But the challenges faced by real people whose families' well-being are at stake while in the pursuit of this goal are monumental. Just to name a few:

- ⇒ The ability to earn a livable wage enabling families to overcome poverty in today's economy is contingent not only on job retention, but the sustained progression from one job to a higher paying job over an estimated three year period.
- ⇒ The "skills gap" between what employers are saying they need and what individuals actually bring to the table is getting larger, not smaller;
- ⇒ Employers expect employees to enter the workforce with a set of behaviors and attitudes that reflect a history of work experience that many people do not have;

- ⇒ A growing percentage of "jobs" are being replaced with alternative employment relationships including employee temping, leasing, contracting, etc., making up the ever-growing "contingent workforce". As we place people in the work world we cannot be certain that their positions will be outsourced, "right-sized" or otherwise become obsolete. New realities of the emerging work world have added an additional factor to the challenge of job retention. Where our concern for job retention used to revolve solely around the question "Will the employee last?" the new question is "Will the job last?"
- ⇒ A huge percentage of the jobs being created are in small businesses with 10 employees or less. Many of these entrepreneurs are not necessarily equipped with the supervisory and managerial skills to adequately develop and grow the new employee in today's diverse workforce. We are putting people to work in workplaces where the policies, procedures and personalities of that workplace are fairly unpredictable.

## **Underlying Beliefs of 30 Ways to Shine**

**30 Ways to Shine as a New Employee** was developed to address the challenges and realities listed above as well as to reflect the following underlying principles and premises:

- ✘ For good or for bad, the fate of a new employee in a job is largely in his/her hands. The more awareness and conscious decision-making the new employee brings to the process the better.
- ✘ Because we cannot be assured of the quality or quantity of workplace coaching and supervision, we should equip the individual with the skills, attitudes and habits that will help ease the transition and to become quickly productive for the employer. This program does not usurp or negate the need for good supervision of any employee - it is simply intended as an aid that can augment good supervision or assist the employee who is without it.
- ✘ While every workplace presents its unique set of requirements, challenges, the 30 skills presented in the guide are relevant and applicable to every workplace.

- ✦ Psychologists talk about intrinsic motivation (being driven by internal needs and desires) and extrinsic motivation (being driven by rewards or circumstances from the outside.) Because none of us have much control over outside circumstances, people who are internally motivated have a greater degree of satisfaction and success because they have a higher degree of influence over their own happiness. This program works to build in the new employee more internal motivation and less focus on outside rewards.
- ✦ General life maintenance and job retention do not have a casual relationship - they are inextricably tied to one another. **30 Ways to Shine as a New Employee** prompts the individual to pay attention to his/her whole life, not just his/her work life. As a person becomes healthier, happier and more fulfilled in their larger life, their work life will take on a similar glow.
- ✦ During a time of transition and change, new employees need to keep their energy and focus in areas where they have control. This program helps to tame worry and harness hope by presenting challenges in small, incremental steps. It is through everyday experience of success and progress that confidence and self esteem grow and strengthen.

Each of the 30 skills in the new employee guide provides a "Challenge of the Day" laying out a series of small, achievable tasks or assignments related to that skill area. These tasks are specific, measurable and made relevant to the employee's work environment. This program, in essence, is more about personal power and self-confidence in the workplace than anything else. Everything else is possible from a springboard of confidence.

- ✦ It is important for the new employee to approach the job from the perspective of taking one step towards true livelihood and career development. In that spirit, here are the premises presented to the new employee in the introduction of the 30 Ways to Shine. (Refer to pages 3 - 7 of the guide for the detailed version of these premises.)

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- *Livelihood is a journey, not a destination. You plan to use this job so that it works on your behalf in the present and for your future.*
- *Any job you do is worth doing well.*
- *You'll get as much as from your job as you are willing to put into it.*
- *Attitude matters!*
- *It is the small, daily choices you make that determine and shape your destiny.*
- *Successful employees treat their employers as customers, not caretakers.*
- *Success on the job is related to skills and behaviors that are learnable.*
- *You want more from work than a paycheck.*

# Eight Options for Use of 30 Ways to Shine as a New Employee

## Participant Services

### Uses For Pre-Employment

#### 1. Intensive Job Retention Workshop

Use the guide as the basis for a 2-3 day intensive workshop to prepare participants for the challenges of becoming a new employee. Participants are then prepared to put the skills into practice when they enter the workplace.

#### 2. Supportive Curriculum to augment vocational training, basic education or job search training programs which have job retention goals and outcomes.

Taking one skill at a time, this guide can be used as an on-going program augmenting other training. This sends the message that your programs are not just targeted towards the short-term goal of becoming employed, but are committed to the long-term goal of job retention and career development. Most of the skills can be put into practice in the context of training, particularly those that build communication, problem-solving, assertiveness and team-building skills.

#### 3. Individualized pre-employment counseling.

Participants can be led through the 30 skills on an individualized basis with support from a case manager or counselor with the goal of preparing them for the workplace.

## Uses for Post Placement Services

### 4. Individually - Independent Program with Occasional Support

Once employed, this guide serves an ideal resource for providing individual guidance and support in the new workplace. The new employee uses the guide independently with occasional input and feedback from an assigned agency staff person.

### 5. Individually - Guided Program with Structured Support from Agency Staff

For new employees who require or could benefit from more intensive support, this guide can be used as the basis for daily dialogue and problem solving. The 30 Skills provide the impetus and rationale for a structured and on-going conversation with the assigned agency staff person.

### 6. Post Placement Job Retention Support Group

The guide serves as an excellent curriculum for an on-going retention support group with meeting agendas built around specified skills. Where new employees may not otherwise be inspired to attend, the 30 skills may provide the motivation to share and get feedback on what they are learning. This is an ideal use of the program since it makes the new employee accountable to others for the completion of *Challenges of the Day*. They will also learn a great deal by hearing about other's experiences in a wide variety of work settings.

## Employer Services

### 7. Resource Guide

Employers who hire from agencies often consult staff when they confront problems with new employees. This guide can serve as a resource for agency staff in responding to employer challenges. For example, if an employer calls with a concern that the new employee is not integrating with other employees, the appropriate staff person may be in touch with the new employee to complete (or repeat) Skill # 14 Being a Team Player - Developing Human Relations Skills. This may encourage a stronger employer-agency relationship.

### 8. Agency-Sponsored Mentorship Training for Employers

This guide could serve as the curriculum for training provided by agency to enhance employer's ability to retain employees. This could become a value-added service provided by your agency. Employers could be responsible for the purchase of the guides for their own employees.

### Suggested Combinations of Options:

Option #1 and Option #4: Pre-employment workshop and Independent use with occasional support from agency staff

Option #4 or #5 with Option #6: Independent Use with Occasional or Structured Support and a Job Retention Support Group

Option #8 with #6: Employer Mentorship using the guide and a Job Retention Support Group.

## THE PLANNING MATRIX

This section provides a summary and description of the 30 skills covered in the guide identifying areas of competence that each skill strengthens in the new employee. This matrix is designed to be a quick reference tool for the planning and implementation of the guide for various purposes including:

- Situational problem-solving;
- A workshop tool;
- A mentoring workbook; or,
- A self-study program

## CATEGORIES ON THE PLANNING MATRIX

### Communication

Regardless of the position, every new employee's experience in the workplace will be enhanced with the ability to communicate confidently and effectively with supervisors, co-workers and customers. This category identifies employee communication skills such as listening attentively, choosing words carefully, expressing themselves clearly, and paying attention to how they are communicating non-verbally.

### Assertiveness

Learning to respond to work situations assertively rather than passively or aggressively is critical to job retention. This category identifies those skills that cultivate and reinforce new employees' ability to assert themselves professionally and appropriately in the workplace, including the ability to speak up when there is a problem, to ask relevant questions and to request assistance when needed.

## **Performance**

All employees could benefit from clarifying their specific goals and objectives, learning to use their time wisely, utilizing feedback in order to improve, and aspiring to some form of progress every day on the job. This category identifies those skills that will enhance new employees' ability to meet performance standards and to measure their daily and weekly progress.

## **Attitude**

While a positive attitude cannot be manufactured, bought or sold, every supervisor attests to the power it wields in the workplace. This category identifies those skills that cultivate and reinforce new employees' ability to maintain a positive attitude on the job. Such as the ability to be aware of choices in their thinking about any situation, to see the big picture in a situation rather than react to the emotions of the moment, or to give other people the benefit of the doubt.

## **Work Habits**

In the same way that common sense is not always common, basic work habits are not always basic. Habits that used to be required as "entrance at the gate" are becoming harder and harder to come by in today's entry-level labor force. This category identifies basic work habits without which the new employee may quickly become "unemployed", for example, getting to work on time, maintaining good hygiene, calling in when sick, and expressing emotions appropriately.

## **Problem-Solving**

For most new employees, the first six weeks seem like a landmine of surprises and problems. While challenges are unavoidable, it is possible to foster new employees' ability to cope with them. This category identifies those skills that cultivate and reinforce the new employee's ability to resolve conflict and solve problems as they arise on the job. These skills include controlling anger, dealing with negative feedback, working with difficult people, and seeking mentorship for ongoing advice as problems arise.

## **Team Building**

Growing the employee's feeling of belonging and contribution to the team is a powerful way to build commitment and confidence in the new employee. This category identifies those skills which foster simple behaviors that enhance teamwork, such as learning to introduce oneself, remembering people's names, learning about other team members' jobs, volunteering to help out team members when needed and giving positive feedback to fellow team members.

## **Informational**

It has been said that information is power. For a new employee, some information represents the *power to survive* and adapt to the new environment, at least in the first six weeks of employment. This category identifies those skills that enable employees to become informed about the company they work for and the industry they have entered, including the company culture, policies and procedures, company expectations, performance standards and career development opportunities.

## **Diversity Skill**

Successful businesses in today's global market work to foster an inclusive environment valuing diversity, not only in their products and clientele, but in their workforce as well. This category identifies those skills that encourage the new employee to contribute to an inclusive workforce. These skills include becoming aware of similarities and differences among team members, valuing one's own contribution to the workplace, learning to listen and being cognizant of non-verbal communication, and paying attention to the part that perspective plays in one's perceptions of others.

## **Stress-Reduction**

It is a challenge for all employees to handle the stress of a new job and juggle the pressures of work and family life. This challenge can be faced more effectively, however, when new employees practice stress-reducing behaviors from the beginning. This category identifies those skills which build that capacity, for example, coping with difficulties and showing flexibility, redefining wealth and practicing daily gratitude, and participating in ongoing activities that enrich their social, family and/or spiritual lives.

## **Initiative**

The success of any thriving business is largely attributed to the ingenuity, enthusiasm and ambition of its owners. Cultivating the qualities of enterprise and initiative in new employees will benefit not only the employer, but also the business of their own careers. This category identifies skills and behaviors that reinforce initiative on the part of new employees, such as asking good questions, going the extra mile in customer service, looking for ways to improve their own effectiveness, and taking responsibility for the quality of the relationships they are forming with co-workers. (These skills are bound to give pause to current employees lacking in initiative!)

# 30 Ways to Shine as a New Employee

## PLANNING MATRIX

<b>New Beginnings (Skills 1-5)</b>	Communication	Assertiveness	Performance	Attitude	Work Habits	Problem Solving	Team Building	Informational	Diversity Skill	Stress Reduction	Initiative
<p><b>1. Calming New Employee Jitters —</b> <i>Think Progress, Not Perfection</i></p> <p>Seven helpful hints for dealing with the stress of being a new employee! Helps alleviate the self-induced stress typical of new employees.</p>			✓	✓	✓					✓	✓
<p><b>2. Dealing with Change —</b> <i>Prepare for the Winding Road of Transition</i></p> <p>A detailed map of four stages of transition often experienced in a new job and great tips for dealing effectively with each stage. Lends a necessary perspective to employees who feel lost in those first few weeks on the job.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓		✓	
<p><b>3. Understanding Workplace Culture —</b> <i>When in Rome, Do as the Romans Do</i></p> <p>An invaluable assessment of workplace culture through an inventory of written and unwritten rules and protocol. Essential tool for job retention!</p>					✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	
<p><b>4. Meeting New People —</b> <i>Take Advantage of a Clean Slate</i></p> <p>Great suggestions for starting new relationships off on the right foot. Builds self-confidence and eases the new employee's integration onto the work team!</p>	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
<p><b>5. Satisfying Employer Expectations —</b> <i>Fifteen Key Behaviors</i></p> <p>A practical survey listing essential behaviors expected in today's workplace. May serve as "reality therapy" for some!</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓

# 30 Ways to Shine as a New Employee

## PLANNING MATRIX

<h3>Stepping Out (Skills 6-10)</h3>	Communication	Assertiveness	Performance	Attitude	Work Habits	Problem Solving	Team Building	Informational	Diversity Skill	Stress Reduction	Initiative
<p><b>6. Learning to Relate in the Company Style — <i>Dance with Wolves</i></b></p> <p>Highlights what to watch for, listen to and ask about in order to relate in the company style. An often overlooked but important aspect of job retention.</p>	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓	✓		
<p><b>7. Clarifying Performance Goals — <i>Target Your Goals and Make Them SMART</i></b></p> <p>Assists new employees to develop work goals that are Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely. Essential for effective skill development!</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
<p><b>8. Paying Attention to Your Surroundings — <i>Your Workplace as a Learning Place</i></b></p> <p>Lists fourteen categories of workplace learning that go beyond traditional competencies. Inspires a learning attitude bent towards growth. Especially helpful in a position the new employee considers repetitive or unchallenging.</p>			✓	✓	✓			✓		✓	✓
<p><b>9. Learning From Mistakes — <i>Make Fresh Ones, Not the Same Ones</i></b></p> <p>Encourages the new employee to view mistakes as a fundamental source of workplace learning rather than as failure. Crucial for building self-esteem and taking the fear out of learning.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓
<p><b>10. Not Letting Worry Cramp Your Style — <i>Adopt the Gretzky Approach to Making “GOALS”</i></b></p> <p>Replaces unproductive “worrying” with a willingness to take risks. In the words of the great hockey player, Wayne Gretzky, “100% of the shots you don’t take don’t go in.” This helps new employees identify the shots they are refusing to take.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓

# 30 Ways to Shine as a New Employee

## PLANNING MATRIX

<b>Habits for Success (Skills 11-15)</b>	Communication	Assertiveness	Performance	Attitude	Work Habits	Problem Solving	Team Building	Informational	Diversity Skill	Stress Reduction	Initiative
<b>11. Reflecting the Company Image — <i>Play to Your Audience</i></b>  Prompts the new employee to look with a keener eye at the company image and how he/she should reflect that image in his/her position.			✓		✓		✓	✓	✓		
<b>12. Exceeding Employer Expectations — <i>Go the Extra Mile</i></b>  Simple, usable guidelines for the employee to look beyond the normal confines of a job and find a way to go the extra mile in his/her position. Promotes a sense of personal responsibility for being valued on the team.	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	✓			✓
<b>13. Shining in the Eyes of the Customer — <i>Roll Out the Carpet in Service</i></b>  Explores the parameters of customer needs and desires and suggests new and compelling ways to enhance customer service. Another great way to increase the new employee's sense of personal power on the job!	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓			✓
<b>14. Being a Team Player — <i>Develop Your Human Relations Skills</i></b>  A potpourri of practical ideas on how to become a valuable player on the team and develop good relationships with co-workers. Everyone will appreciate the benefits from this one!	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		
<b>15. Surviving Office Politics — <i>Develop Workplace Savvy</i></b>  Twenty hot tips for relating well in a community of people and avoiding the inner-office politics that often arise in a work setting. Important information for employees new to the workforce!	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	

# 30 Ways to Shine as a New Employee

## PLANNING MATRIX

<b>Gifts of Perspective and Choice (Skills16-20)</b>	Communication	Assertiveness	Performance	Attitude	Work Habits	Problem Solving	Team Building	Informational	Diversity Skill	Stress Reduction	Initiative
<b>16. Choosing to Think Positive — <i>Overlook the Mud and See the Stars</i></b>  Reinforces the importance of how our thinking profoundly affects our experience and can change an obstacle into an opportunity. New employees will relate to and benefit from the examples provided!				✓	✓	✓			✓		✓
<b>17. Facing Your Fear and Finding Courage — <i>Look the World Straight in the Eye</i></b>  Suggests a series of steps for overcoming fear and mustering everyday courage. A respectful approach to a difficult topic – crucial for the new employee whose confidence is lacking.		✓		✓		✓					✓
<b>18. Breaking Bad Habits of the Mind — <i>An Experiment in Attitude</i></b>  Identifies a dozen bad habits of the mind and proposes a plan for replacing these habits with more healthy ones that result in a better attitude at work.		✓		✓	✓				✓	✓	✓
<b>19. Coping with Everyday Life — <i>The Art of Flexibility</i></b>  Inspires the new employee to increase the ability to be flexible and cope with the stress of everyday life in the workplace. An important issue for the employee who is new to the workforce.			✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓	✓
<b>20. Taking Small Steps to Change — <i>Use Time Wisely</i></b>  A simple and straightforward activity that reinforces the value of using time in a focused way and encourages small steps to change in life and work.		✓	✓		✓					✓	✓

# 30 Ways to Shine as a New Employee

## PLANNING MATRIX

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Taking the Bitter with the Sweet</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>(Skills 21-25)</b></p>	Communication	Assertiveness	Performance	Attitude	Work Habits	Problem Solving	Team Building	Informational	Diversity Skill	Stress Reduction	Initiative
<p><b>21. Controlling Your Anger — Keep Your Head So You Don't Lose Your Job</b></p> <p>A sensible and direct approach to identifying and controlling one's anger in the workplace. A variety of options are suggested for what to do or where to go with one's anger. This skill may prevent circumstances that could otherwise become explosive.</p>	✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓	✓		✓	
<p><b>22. Making Yourself Understood — Choose the Right Words to Express Your Feelings</b></p> <p>Improves the new employee's ability to articulate and express his/her feelings and promote effective communications with supervisors and co-workers.</p>	✓	✓			✓	✓		✓	✓	✓	✓
<p><b>23. Benefiting from Praise and Criticism — Respond Well to Feedback</b></p> <p>Presents effective strategies for responding well to feedback and using praise and criticism to grow and improve on the job. This perspective is critical for new employees who are not used to receiving constructive criticism or who react defensively to feedback.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓	✓
<p><b>24. Developing the Ability to Really Listen — Be All Ears and Don't Tune Out</b></p> <p>Emphasizes the value of the ability to listen and helps the new employee identify his/her tune-out mode. This may be the most underrated and most critical job retention skill of all!</p>	✓	✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓		✓
<p><b>25. Dealing with Difficult People — Kill Em' with Kindness</b></p> <p>Equips the new employee with perspective and practical ideas for dealing with difficult people. Important skill for dealing with the inevitable challenges of a workplace community.</p>		✓		✓		✓	✓		✓	✓	✓

# 30 Ways to Shine as a New Employee

## PLANNING MATRIX

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Making the Job Work for You (Skills 26-30)</b></p>	Communication	Assertiveness	Performance	Attitude	Work Habits	Problem Solving	Team Building	Informational	Diversity Skill	Stress Reduction	Initiative
<p><b>26. Making A Difference —</b> <i>Focus on Your Purpose</i></p> <p>Changes the new employee’s focus from getting to giving and strengthens the new employee’s sense of purpose on the job. Great self-esteem booster!</p>		✓	✓	✓	✓						✓
<p><b>27. Making Work Meaningful —</b> <i>Put Your Values to Work</i></p> <p>Motivates the new employee to look at work as something you <i>bring meaning to</i> rather than <i>get meaning from</i>. Helps new employees assess their work values and set an action plan for bringing those values to work.</p>		✓	✓	✓					✓	✓	✓
<p><b>28. Living Each Day Gratefully —</b> <i>Redefine Wealth</i></p> <p>Fosters an “attitude of gratitude” and highlights the multitude of ways in which the new employees already enjoy an abundance of wealth in their lives. A great perspective-buster for entry-level employees who feel discouraged from having to start at the bottom.</p>				✓	✓					✓	
<p><b>29. Learning From a Mentor —</b> <i>A Smart Step in Moving Forward</i></p> <p>A terrific summary of the meaning, purposes and how-to’s of mentorship as well as a tool and action plan for pursuing mentorship. Engenders the goal of career development.</p>	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓			✓
<p><b>30. Balancing Life and Work —</b> <i>Food for the Soul</i></p> <p>Cultivates an appreciation for life and work and the importance of creating a healthy balance in order to cope with the stress of employment. Includes a list of 26 creative ideas for enhancing the new employee’s life outside of work.</p>			✓	✓					✓	✓	✓