



# TOOLS

## SCANS Skills Assessment: Classroom Activity

This activity introduces students to the SCANS<sup>1</sup> *Skills* and provides them with a self-assessment opportunity.

Explain to the students that while participating in their work-based learning opportunities they will learn about the job duties and associated skills needed to be successful. Next, ask the students what kinds of skills they think employers might want their employees to have. You might receive such answers as excellent reading and math skills, punctuality, neat appearance and honesty. List all responses on the board.

Explain to students that today's workplace requires a new type of employee, one who has excellent communication skills, actively engages in teamwork, has problem-solving abilities and continues to learn new ideas and technology. Make it clear that in order to be successful, they need to acquire the new skill sets that today's employers are seeking.

Tell the students that there are basic skills and qualities employers want their employees to have.

Stress that their potential earning power is related to their knowledge and skills. Tell them that they are now going to determine what kinds of skills and qualities they already have by conducting a self-study. Distribute the **SCANS Skills Assessment**. Read the instructions aloud, then give the students about 20 minutes to complete the exercise. Students may use the *SCANS Glossary* for a more detailed description of each of the skills.

After the students have finished the **SCANS Skills Assessment**, ask how many of them had a range of skills (e.g., high in technology but low in systems). Explain that everyone has strengths in different areas. To get a good job, they will need to have at least a three (which is average) in all of the basic job performance skills. Their chances of being hired increases with additional threes and fours. Challenge them to look for these skills when visiting the work site.

**Lead the students in a discussion about the SCANS skills.**

### Questions for discussion

1. What about your responses was a surprise to you? What stands out as a need you have? Where did you build the skills and competencies that you believe you have?
2. Were you aware that you were building this skill or competency as it was happening? Which skills and competencies does school help you develop?
3. If you are currently employed, which skills and competencies seem most important to your performance on the job?
4. Which skills and competencies seem most important for success in school?

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<sup>1</sup>SCANS is an acronym for the Secretary's Commission on Achieving Necessary Skills, which created The SCANS Report for America 2000, issued by the U.S. Department of Labor, April 1992. The report defines a set of skills and competencies necessary for success in the workplace.