

Career Exploration for the ESOL Classroom

Manufacturing Industry



Student Workbook

Institute for the Professional Development of Adult Educators

CAREER EXPLORATION FOR THE ESOL CLASSROOM

Manufacturing Industry

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Introduction to the Manufacturing Industry – Malik, Hanna, Raul

Scenario

“Guess what?” Malik asked his classmates. “I got a job at the new manufacturing company in town.”

That’s great,” said Hanna. “What is your new job?”

“I’m in pre-employment training.” shared Malik. “I am being trained for a job in production. If I do well, then I get hired full time. I know that I will do well. I am a hard worker, and I am a quick learner. The trainer is great and works hard to make sure that I learn what I need to know. Right now we are working on safety. Next, we will work on the math skills that I need to have.”

“You need math skills to work in manufacturing?” Hanna asked.

“Yes,” said Malik, “along with reading, speaking and listening, problem solving, time management, and quality control. There’s so much to learn. It’s so exciting.”

“How did you get interested in manufacturing? asked Hanna. “I would have never thought of that as a career.”

“Well, I have always liked to make things,” said Malik. “Manufacturing is all about planning and designing and making things. I know that some of

Vocabulary

- Career
- Factory
- Manufacturing
- Pre-employment
- Production
- Quality control
- Technician
- Time management

the jobs require a degree, but I think that starting out in production will work well for me.”

“My father used to work in a factory.” Raul chimed in. “He told me that he had to work long hours for very little money and that the factory was noisy and dirty.”

Malik looked at Raul. “That was true many years ago. However, today it’s different. The factory is so clean and quiet. There are all of these computers too. Don’t get me wrong. I will have to work with my hands. As I learn new skills, I want to look at some of the technician jobs. It is very different from what our parents and grandparents saw.”

Raul was thoughtful. “Maybe I need to look at manufacturing as a career. I like the idea of being part of a team that makes something.”

What Do You Think?

1. Why do you think pre-employment training is used by manufacturing companies?
2. How do you think Malik will use math and problem solving in his new job?
3. How do you think manufacturing jobs have changed?
4. Do you think Malik’s career choice is a good one? Why or why not?
5. Would you apply for a job in manufacturing? Why or why not?

A New Job – Malik, Hanna, Raul

Scenario

Malik came to class excited. “I got the job!” he exclaimed. “I will start next week. My new boss said that I got the job because I am good working with my hands, and I have good problem-solving skills. Also, he said that I pay attention to detail which is very important.”

“What types of things will you have to do?” asked Raul.

“Well, my job will be in the production area of our company. I am a team assembler. My job is to make sure that our company’s logo is put on each finished product. Then, I have to pack the products and prepare them for shipping. When I am done, I send the boxes to another team member who logs each box into the computer and makes sure they are delivered.”

“Is shipping all that the company does?” asked Raul.

“No, not at all,” said Malik. “In the production department, some workers on my team make sure that the machinery is working. They make sure that our workstation is clean and safe. If there are problems with the equipment, we contact the repair department. Other workers on our team make sure that each product is assembled correctly. They also inspect our product to make sure it is up to our company’s quality standards. If not, they remove the product. Then there are other workers who make sure that we are meeting our production quota.”

“What’s that?” asked Raul.

Vocabulary

- Assembled
- Attention
- Detail
- Logo
- Logs
- Problem-solving skills
- Production quota
- Quality
- Workstation

“Production quota is our goal for how many products we need to make a day.” said Malik. “Quotas are just like the goals we set in class. It helps us know what we need to do to complete a task successfully.”

“Wow,” said Hanna. “I never knew what it took to make a product.”

“But there is even more,” said Malik. “Besides production, there are also departments for maintenance, installation and repair, quality assurance, inventory, health and safety, and even a design section with engineers. There is so much to do to just make one of our products. It’s hard to believe all the different career paths in our manufacturing company.”

“Do you have to work lots of hours?” asked Hanna.

“I will work 40 hours a week on the evening shift,” said Mikel. “Plus, I have benefits.”

What Do You Think?

1. Why do you think a company sets production quotas?
2. Why do you think Hanna says “I never knew what it took to make a product”?
3. Why do think it takes so many different types of jobs in a manufacturing company?
4. Have you ever started a new career? Why did you choose the career?

Next Steps – Malik, Mr. Lei

Scenario

Malik was pleased with his job. Each day he learned more about production. However, Malik wanted to look at other career pathways. Some of his friends really enjoyed what they were doing. Other team members had transferred to maintenance and repair. They had taken machining and welding classes at the local technical center.

Malik wasn't sure what pathway to take. Malik knew that he needed to improve his technical skills. Malik also realized that he needed better speaking and reading skills. Many of the jobs required training. Malik knew that it was important that he spend time planning for his future.

Malik decided to talk with his supervisor, Mr. Lei. Mr. Lei was very pleased that Malik was interested in a future in manufacturing.

“Have you ever thought about becoming a manufacturing production technician?” Mr. Lei asked.

“What does a manufacturing production technician do?” asked Malik.

“Manufacturing is very automated,” said Mr. Lei. “We need technicians. A manufacturing production technician sets up, tests, and adjusts new equipment.

“That sounds interesting,” said Malik. “What type of training would I need?”

Vocabulary

- Automated
- Career Pathway
- Machining
- Maintenance
- Manufacturing production technician
- Technical skills
- Transferred
- Welding

“Do you know Elias and Berta?” asked Mr. Lei. “Both of them are manufacturing production technicians. Elias has an associate’s degree in industrial maintenance. He went to college to learn his skills.

“Berta took courses at the local technical center,” continued Mr. Lei. “She took courses in electronics and mechanics. She also took classes to improve her reading and writing skills. It is really important that you can read technical manuals. As our company grows, we need more technicians.”

“That sounds like a great career,” said Malik. “I know that I would need to improve my reading and computer skills. I would be willing to go to school and work hard. Do you think there would be a job for me if I get my degree?”

What Do You Think?

1. What do you think Malik meant when he said that he wasn’t sure what pathway to take?
2. Why is it important to spend time planning for a career?
3. Have you ever changed careers? If so, what did you do to prepare for the change?
4. Why do you think that Malik spoke with his supervisor?
5. What do you think Malik’s next step should be? Why?

Glossary

Assembled: *verb* – to put something together.

Attention: *noun* – to notice or observe something.

Automated: *verb* – to run or operate something by using machines or computers instead of people to do the work.

Career: *noun* – a profession that usually needs training.

Career Pathway: *noun* – an organized way to career planning for individuals who want to start a career or improve their skills for different or better job opportunities.

Detail: *noun* – a small part of something.

Factory: *noun* – a building where goods are manufactured or assembled.

Logo: *noun* – a symbol or design to identify a product.

Logs: *verb* – to write or record something into an official record.

Machining: *noun* – a manufacturing term that describes taking material and shaping it into an intended design.

Maintenance: *verb* – a manufacturing term that describes joining pieces of metal together through high heat.

Manufacturing: *adj., noun, verb* – the making of goods or producing something.

Manufacturing product technician: *noun* – a person who sets up, tests, and adjusts manufacturing machinery or equipment.

Pre-employment: *adj., noun* – the time before a person is employed or process required before a person starts a new job.

Production: *noun* – the act of making or producing something.

Quality: *noun* – how good or bad something is.

Quality Control: *noun* – a system of maintaining standards or a certain level of quality in products.

Problem-solving skills: *noun* – being able to work through the details of a problem in order to reach a solution.

Production quota: *noun* – the goal for the amount and rate that something is to be manufactured.

Technical skills: *noun* – abilities acquired through learning and practice, such as job skills.

Technician: *noun* – a person employed to look after technical equipment or whose job relates to the practical use of machines.

Time-management: *noun* – the ability to use one's time effectively or productively, especially at work.

Transferred: *verb* – to move to a different job or position.

Welding: *verb* – a manufacturing term that describes joining pieces of metal together through high heat.

Workstation: *noun* – an area where a specific job is done.