

# CDMP High School Vocational Preparation Skills

## Getting ready for apprenticeship

Do you like to work with your hands? Do you like working outdoors? Do you like tinkering with cars, electronics, or bikes? Then you may be interested in a career in construction, telecommunications or electrician.

## Start getting ready in the 9th Grade...

- Get to school on time every day. This will establish you as a dependable person and valued employee.
- Plan a tentative apprenticeship preparation schedule for the next four years. It's not too early to begin planning.
- Talk to your parents about apprenticeship school. Get to know a professional construction worker and ask him/ her to counsel you.
- Learn how to prepare for and take exams. Many of apprenticeship exams require basic knowledge in mathematics and mechanical aptitude.
- Get involved in extracurricular activities such as: woodworking, working on stage sets for theater, drawing, computers and science experiments.
- Work for your church or other community groups like Habitat for Humanity, where you can volunteer and simultaneously receive "hands-on" experience.

## 10th Grade

- Make sure you are following your apprenticeship-prep schedule. See your counselor if you have any doubts.
- Stop and watch a building being built. Ask for a tour.
- Become familiar with the career information in your school and community in those skilled trades you are considering.
- Go to career days. Find out information on your local Boy Scouts Explorer Program, which can expose you to the different aspects of a career in construction.

## **11th Grade**

- Find out about school-to-registered apprenticeship programs where you can learn while doing.
- Call a contractor association in your area for a list of contractors to talk to regarding part-time jobs. Some crafts have shop helpers.
- Develop a Rolodex file of business cards of people you meet so that you have a network of people that you know in the industry.
- Find someone who would be willing to be a mentor to you. Talk to construction professionals in your area of interest.
- For your birthday, ask for a pair of good work boots, and maybe your own Carhartt jacket.

## **12th Grade**

- Begin narrowing your choice of apprenticeship schools to two or three by mid-September.
- Get application forms for each of the schools you are interested in and fill them out as soon as possible.
- Request letters of recommendation from teachers or other professionals.
- Good Luck! Vocational and Trade jobs are an exciting career and the rewards can be great.

### **SOURCE:**

MUST – Management & Unions Serving Together  
21353 Bridge Street  
Southfield, Michigan 48033  
Phone: (248)352-9810  
Fax: (248)352-9814  
[www.mustonline.org](http://www.mustonline.org)

## What are the Benefits of Vocational Training?

Upon completing all vocational requirements, not only can students embark upon a professional or academic career, but many high school graduates even continue to immediately pursue apprenticeships, specialized college programs, or other professional routes.

With the diverse skills acquired from their public school vocational programs, students are able to gain unique benefits, such as:

- Hands on learning experiences
- Training from licensed vocational teachers
- Program-specific experiences and knowledge
- Safety, support, and remedial interventions and training
- Career guidance, placement support, and career explorations for incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders
- Academic and vocational assessments
- A high school diploma and proficiency certificate
- Co-ops, internships, job shadows, and / or apprenticeships

In addition to the academic, social, and personal benefits of vocational opportunities, many leaders assert that even non-vocational students can benefit from these programs. Specifically, as vocational programs often cater to the needs of active and kinesthetic learners, students enrolled in a vocational class can engage with more movement, hands on activities, and unique processes for enhancing their education. When these same students are in a traditional, passive classroom setting, they often struggle to remain quiet and focused, potentially resulting in an overall distraction for all students and the instructor. As a result, students who are provided with the ability to choose their classroom and instructional method with greater freedom may be more able to improve their overall learning experience and behavioral development.

**Source: Grace Chen**