Chapter Objectives

After studying this chapter, you will be able to

- **explain** how getting along with others can help you succeed on the job.
- **identify** the rules of proper workplace conduct.
- **describe** ways to recognize and handle stress.
- **evaluate** your job performance and the job itself.
- **explain** the purpose of job performance reviews.
- **describe** the options for changing your job status.
- **recognize** the signs of a stalled career and the best way to change jobs.
- **debate** the pros and cons of union membership.

**Reading Advantage**

Predict what you think will be covered in this chapter. Make a list of your predictions. After reading the chapter, decide if your predictions were correct.
Key Concepts

- Your first day on the job may include attending an orientation, meeting coworkers, and becoming familiar with your duties.
- Demonstrating proper conduct on the job includes getting along with others, following directions, taking responsibility, and controlling anger.
- Job stress can have positive and negative effects on people.
- Changes in job status can include promotions, lateral moves, demotions, or being fired.
- Unions bargain with management for better wages, working hours, working conditions, and benefits.
What does it mean to succeed on the job? To many people, being successful on the job means doing their jobs well and not getting fired. To others, job success is having more pay, more responsibilities, and a new title.

To succeed at any job, you must stick with it. Do not be surprised if it takes several weeks to adjust to your job and learn your responsibilities. You will need to work hard to learn all your duties, but you should not try to get too far ahead of yourself. You cannot expect to accomplish everything in only a few weeks.

Your First Day on the Job

Your first step toward job success begins the first day on the job. As you learn your job duties and adjust to your job, your chances for success will increase.

Starting a new job and working with new people in a new environment may make you feel a little nervous. Most people feel this way when they start a new job. Planning ahead can help you feel more prepared for that first day. Think about how you should dress for the job and have your clothes out the night before. Allow yourself plenty of time to get ready. That means getting dressed, eating, and preparing a lunch if necessary. Arrive a few minutes early at the job—definitely do not be late on your first day. Keeping a positive attitude will help you start your new job the right way.

What you do on the first day at work depends on your employer. A small business may want you to start working right away. Larger companies usually have an employee orientation for new workers. During the orientation you will likely learn the company’s history, policies, rules, and safety procedures. You may be asked to fill out personnel forms. You may also be asked to take a drug test. After the orientation, you will report to your supervisor.

Your supervisor is responsible for your training. On your first day, he or she will show you where you work and explain your duties. You will be introduced to your coworkers. Sometimes another worker will teach you how to do the job, or you may watch an experienced worker. Depending on your job, you may attend a company training program or school. In any case, your concern at this point should be learning to do the job.

Pay close attention and show an interest in learning your job duties. Ask questions if you do not completely understand what is expected of you. Because you are new, do not try to work at full speed the first day. At this point, accuracy is much more important than speed. Try to do the job to the best of your ability, but if you make a mistake, do not worry. Inform your supervisor of your mistake and learn something from it. Making a true effort to do your best will help you succeed.
Relating to Others at Work

Learning your job duties is one of the first steps in starting a new job. To achieve success on the job, however, you also need to work well with other people. Companies function best when employees cooperate and work together as a team. Your ability to get along with your supervisor and coworkers will contribute to your success on the job.

Working with Your Supervisor

In addition to training, your supervisor is responsible for your job performance. He or she must make sure your work is completed and done well. Your supervisor will observe your work to see how well you are doing your job and getting along with others. You may be encouraged to work faster or to try a new way of doing a job. Remember, this is constructive criticism. It can help you improve your skills and work more efficiently. See 19-1.

Sometimes you may be assigned tasks you do not want to do. As a beginner, you should perform these tasks as well as you would any others. Consider them learning experiences.

Supervisors have different personalities and management styles. No matter what type of supervisor you have, make the effort to learn and to cooperate with him or her. Listen and follow through on all suggestions. Most supervisors want you to succeed on the job, but you must do your part to promote a good working relationship.

19-1
When you start a new job, be prepared to listen to your supervisor, accept instructions, and ask questions.
**Working with Coworkers**

As a new employee, getting along with and being accepted by your coworkers is important. First, you will be happier and enjoy your work more in a workplace where everyone is pleasant to others. Second, you and coworkers will probably get more work done if you enjoy working together. It is important that you show an ability to work cooperatively with others. This cooperative effort could lead to future pay raises or even a better job.

Part of getting along with others depends on you. When you start your job, introduce yourself to coworkers if your supervisor has not done so. Learn their names. Try to be pleasant without overdoing it. Be friendly and most coworkers will accept you. Respect and accept them as both individuals and teammates. They have knowledge and skills to contribute to the company.

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**In the Real World**

**Dealing with Restaurant Customers**

John worked as a server in a restaurant known for its fine food and excellent customer service. There were many restaurants in town, but this relatively new restaurant had quickly established many loyal customers. John was careful to place the table service correctly and present the menus properly. He did these tasks better than any of his coworkers.

John seemed to have a reserved manner with customers, however. He didn’t smile much and his face often looked grim. When a customer complained about the food, the bill, or the service, John became irritable. He occasionally talked back to customers. This conduct was strictly forbidden in the restaurant’s employee handbook. John also complained to his coworkers.

One night just before closing, a large group entered the restaurant. The people were seated in John’s area. He took their orders and served them properly even though he wanted to go home early. When the group finished eating, it was after the closing hour. John noticed they left a smaller tip than he expected.

Just as the group was leaving John said, “That wasn’t much of a tip for the service you got.” His boss heard the comment and fired John on the spot.

**Questions to Discuss**

1. Why was John fired?
2. What rules of proper conduct did John disobey?
3. Do you think John’s boss fired him too hastily? Would you have given John another chance?
Although you may not become close friends with all of them, you should respect their positive qualities. Try to be a likable person so coworkers will enjoy working with you. Remember, you are a beginner getting to know your job. Learn to accept suggestions or criticism positively as a way to improve your work. Acting like a know-it-all or being self-centered will give others a bad impression of you.

Your Conduct and Job Success

Another important factor in getting along with others and being successful on the job is worker conduct. Employers want workers who behave properly on the job. The rules of proper workplace conduct are shown in 19-2 and explained here. Employees who demonstrate proper on-the-job conduct do the following:

- **Follow directions.**—Pay close attention and show interest in learning your job duties. Make sure you perform all your responsibilities on the job. If necessary, keep careful notes about your assignments so you do not forget any directions.

- **Enjoy learning.**—Upgrade your skills whenever possible. Willingly try new tasks and believe in your ability to succeed, 19-3. Accept suggestions and constructive criticism about your work with a positive attitude.

- **Act responsibly.**—When your work is done, find other tasks to do instead of killing time. Let your supervisor know that you need more assignments added to your workload.

- **Be enthusiastic.**—Keep an upbeat attitude. Avoid letting problems at home or school interfere with your work.

- **Deal with mistakes.**—Learn from your small mistakes and avoid repeating them. Report big mistakes to your supervisor as soon as possible and discuss how to handle them. Above all, do not cover up mistakes or deny they ever happened.

- **Handle gossip.**—Avoid talking about others behind their backs and you will be trusted by everyone. Most office gossip is merely rumor or suspicion, neither of which is worth your time.

- **Control anger.**—Try to get along with everyone, and stay in full control of your emotions. When events become too heated, find a way to break the tension so everyone can take time to think. Voice legitimate complaints to the proper authorities instead of complaining to coworkers.

- **Assert yourself.**—Be “in charge” of your job assignments. Act confidently and voice your convictions. A **conviction** is a strong belief. Defend the decisions you make and the people who followed your directions and helped you.
Take responsibility.—Do assignments well, meet all deadlines, and alert your supervisor if you think you may miss a deadline. Do not make excuses for poor performance or bad decisions. Accept your errors and correct them. Do not blame problems on coworkers.

The reasons employees are fired will be discussed later in this chapter. You will learn that improper conduct on the job is the main cause of most firings. If you need to improve your conduct in any of the areas discussed here, start now. It is never too late to modify behaviors that need improvement.

Handling Job Stress

No matter where you work or how well you get along with others, you are likely to face some sort of job stress. By understanding stress and what causes it, you can learn to handle it effectively.

People face some form of stress in their lives every day. Stress is a feeling of pressure, strain, or tension that results from change. Change can create different levels of stress. Major changes, such as the death of a friend or the loss of a job, are extremely stressful. Losing a homework assignment or being late for work is less stressful. Even positive changes like a pay raise or a vacation can be stressful.

Stress can have positive or negative effects on people. It can motivate them to get things done or face new challenges. On the other hand, stress can cause frustration, anger, and lower productivity. Too much stress can affect a person's body and the mind. It can eventually lead to health problems including headaches or high blood pressure.

Stress, no matter what the cause, can affect job performance. Workers react to stress in different ways. Those who feel great stress are likely to be less productive and have more accidents on the job. They tend to blame and criticize others. Workers who make an effort to handle stress, however, stay in control of their emotions. They may use humor to break the tension. They may try to analyze the situation to find the problem’s cause. Above all, they channel their energy to getting the problem solved and the job done.

You cannot avoid stress in your life, but you can learn how to manage it. Handling stress begins by recognizing the cause and learning to deal with it. Several ways to handle stress effectively are shown in 19-4.

Evaluating Job Performance

After working at a job for several weeks, you can begin to evaluate your job performance and the job itself. To help you find out if you are succeeding on your job, ask yourself the following questions:
Am I making progress in this job? Have you learned how to perform all your duties and do them well? If you are having a problem learning how to do a task, ask your supervisor for assistance. If you are accomplishing your work with time to spare, let your supervisor know you are capable of taking on more responsibility. The more you can learn and accomplish, the faster you will succeed on the job.

Consider the example of Marla, who learned her job duties quickly and became a very productive worker in a few weeks. When she accomplished her assigned work, she asked the supervisor for other assignments to handle. Marla was a responsible and cooperative employee who was always willing to help others with tasks whenever asked. When the assistant supervisor was promoted to a new position, Marla was asked to take that position. She accepted and continued to work just as conscientiously at her new job. Marla’s hard work paid off, and it helped her get better jobs in the future.

Does this job give me personal satisfaction? Do you enjoy the work you do? You cannot expect a job to be all fun and games, but it should not be all drudgery either. Job success depends on the way you feel about your job. To be successful, you must feel your job is useful and helpful to others. If you feel you are making important contributions on the job, you will probably feel pleased about your life and the work you accomplish.

Am I paid adequately for the work I do? Although salary is only one aspect of job success, it is an important one. Check to see what other factors are important to you. Learning to handle stress is the key to good mental and physical health.

Handling Stress

Keep a positive attitude. Use stress in a positive way to help you set and achieve your goals.

Stay healthy. This helps you handle the causes of stress. To relieve stress, try some physical activity.

Discuss your problem. A friend, family member, or counselor may see your problem differently.

Manage your time well. List all your tasks. Do the most important first. Check off each task as you complete it.

Know your limits. Sometimes a problem may be beyond your control and cannot be changed right away. Learn to accept the situation until you can change it.

Cooperate with others. Try to give and take instead of fighting or confronting.

Find healthy ways to relieve stress. Get involved in an activity if you are lonely or sad. Try deep breaths to relieve built-up tension.

Take time to relax and have fun. Relaxing helps you slow down your pace and lessen stress. Recreation gives you a break from your everyday routine.

These paramedics get satisfaction from their work because their job provides important, lifesaving services to others.
In the Real World

The Stressful Boss

Chang feels constant stress on his job. He has been working as a carpenter for three months, and for the entire period his supervisor has watched him almost constantly. On a few occasions, the supervisor criticized Chang’s work.

Chang likes his job, but is bothered by his supervisor’s frequent checkups. Finally, in frustration he yelled to his supervisor, “This job is getting to me because you are constantly watching me. I can’t stand it anymore!”

The supervisor seemed surprised. “That’s my job, Chang,” he replied. “It usually takes a new worker at least six months to adjust to the job. It’s my responsibility to check your work, make sure it’s done right, and be certain you don’t have an accident.”

Chang apologized for his outburst and acknowledged that the supervisor was only doing his job. As a result of their conversation, Chang’s stress was greatly reduced. He was able to concentrate more on learning his job and wasn’t bothered by frequent glances from the supervisor. He knew they were for his benefit.

Questions to Discuss

1. What could Chang have done to handle his stress before it became uncontrollable?
2. Could Chang have been fired for his outburst?
3. Did Chang have a legitimate reason for feeling stress?
4. Are misunderstandings a common reason for stress?

Thinking It Through

How often would you advise workers to ask themselves these questions?

How often would you advise workers to ask themselves these questions?

people with similar jobs are making at other companies. Your wages should be in that range. However, do not expect to begin an entry-level job at a high salary. Normally, a worker can expect to start at the lower end of the wage scale and move up as he or she becomes more productive. If you do not get a salary review or pay increase after six months on the job, you should find out why.

Can I foresee opportunities for advancement? If you do well in your present job, will you be able to move to a higher-paying job with more responsibilities? If you find you are in a job that leads nowhere, it is doubtful that you will find much success in your work. Having a goal to work toward can motivate you to succeed at your present job, 19-6.

Keep in mind that no job is perfect. Every job has its good and bad points. When the bad points outweigh the good, however, you may find you need to change jobs.

Job Probation

Sometimes a worker is hired on a probationary basis. A job probation means a worker is hired for a trial period of time to see how
well he or she can do the job. A probationary period can be as short as a few days or as long as a few months. During this period, a supervisor helps train the new worker and oversees his or her work. The supervisor also evaluates the worker’s job skills, work habits, and ability to get along with coworkers.

Most workers complete their probationary period with very little trouble. With the help of their supervisors, they learn how to be productive at their jobs and avoid making mistakes.

If a worker does not pass probation, he or she is not hired. If this should happen to you, be sure to find out why you did not pass. You do not want to make the same mistakes again at your next job.

Students with work experience are less likely to have problems during their probationary period. This is because past work experience tends to help them adjust to new jobs more easily.

**Performance Rating**

Job success depends a great deal on how your supervisor rates your performance on the job. This is called a performance rating. At most companies, employees are reviewed every six months or once a year and the record is kept on file. During these reviews, employees are rated on their work and social skills as well as their attitudes on the job.

Check sheets are often used by companies to rate employee performance. Employees are rated on job factors such as accuracy of work, ability to work with others, ability to think problems through, and willingness to accept responsibility. The supervisor evaluates an employee’s performance according to a rating scale.

The purpose of performance ratings is to help supervisors identify the weaknesses and strengths of their employees. After a performance rating, a supervisor may decide that an employee’s skills would be better used for a different job. Therefore, the supervisor may move the employee to another position or transfer him or her to another department. For example, after a performance rating, a supervisor may decide to assign a receptionist who has shown excellent keyboarding skills to the position of secretary. A receptionist who has been especially skilled at working with the public may be transferred to the customer service department.

If the employee is having problems with certain tasks, the supervisor can work with the employee to help improve the weaker skills. The supervisor may also assign the worker to another job.

As a result of performance ratings, employees become aware of their strengths and weaknesses. Most supervisors show workers
Employers consider many factors when evaluating a worker's job performance.
their evaluation forms or talk to them about their past performance and future with the company, 19-8. In most cases, employees must sign their forms.

Performance reviews give employees a chance to learn how they can improve their work and become more productive employees. By improving their job performance, they will have an opportunity to get pay raises and take more desirable positions. It is important to examine your performance ratings and what they mean for your future employment.

**Training Opportunities**

The skills required for most jobs are changing rapidly. Your employer will consider how well you perform your present duties and how willing you are to upgrade skills and learn new ones. Employees who are unwilling to take advantage of training opportunities could lose their jobs.

Most companies value employees who are willing to further their training and education. These companies offer employees some type of incentive to do so. An *incentive* is something that inspires a person to act. Some of the ways employees may be inspired to pursue further training include the following:

- free in-house training
- a pay raise
- complete or partial payment of tuition for approved courses taken at technical schools, community colleges, and universities

**Changes in Job Status**

Part of being successful in the workplace is being able to handle changes in your job status in a positive way. Usually, the abilities you demonstrate on the job are the reasons for a change in your job status. The ways that a person’s job status is changed include promotions, lateral moves, demotions, and firing.

**Promotion**

A *promotion* is a transfer to a job classification with a higher pay grade. A promotion is not something an employer gives to just any employee. It is a sign your employer appreciates your job performance. A promotion is an advancement that employees earn by being productive, cooperative, dependable, and responsible on the job, 19-9.

If you are promoted, you will probably be given a new job title, an increase in pay, and more responsibility. With increased responsibility, you may be asked to supervise the work of others. This means your role would change to that of a supervisor. Not only would you be responsible for your work, but also for the work of those under your authority.
Not all promotions lead to supervisory positions. Some are simply a matter of reclassification. For example, Nadira was hired as a secretary at a number three classification. After working six months and receiving a good performance rating, Nadira earned a number two classification. Although her duties stayed the same, Nadira’s salary increased 10 percent. When Nadira advances to the number one classification, there is no higher level for her to achieve as a company secretary. She will continue to receive small pay increases as long as she does good work, but she will not be given any new responsibilities.

The opportunity for a promotion does not come along every day. If you turn down a promotion, it may be a long time before you are offered another one.

**Lateral Move**

A lateral move is a transfer to a different department or another classification in the same pay grade. The person may receive a different title and new responsibilities, but no increase in pay. Lateral moves let workers experience different jobs or departments in a company, which makes them more valuable employees. A lateral move may not be viewed in a positive light by some people. For example, they may consider it a demotion. To them, it signifies the boss does not consider them worthy of a promotion. However, if the company is reducing its workforce, a lateral move may be a compliment. It may mean the company wants to keep the person and is willing to find another position.

**Demotion**

A demotion is a transfer to a classification in a lower pay grade. A demotion usually indicates the company is not satisfied with the work of the employee. It usually is a final warning before an employee is fired.

A demotion is never considered a positive achievement in a person’s career. When it occurs, it is important for the employee to take this last opportunity to work hard and demonstrate a desire to keep his or her job. When demoted, however, the employee usually starts looking for employment elsewhere.

**Being Fired**

A person who is fired no longer works for the company. This separation from the company is also called being released or let go. This change in job status is the hardest to accept. Knowing the reason for being fired sometimes helps ease the pain, but not entirely. If an employee is released because of cutbacks in the workforce, it is easier to understand.
If an employee is let go because of poor work performance or other negative reasons, usually the employee is not really surprised. Employees who do not perform as expected are normally aware they may be fired. Ninety percent of firings, however, are due to personal reasons such as improper conduct and difficulty working with others. Often these people have good job skills. These are the most common reasons employers give for firing employees:

- absenteeism—not showing up for work on a regular basis
- loafing—taking long breaks, leaving workstations for no good reason, or daydreaming on the job
- personality conflicts—not getting along with the supervisor or coworkers
- violating company rules—primarily fighting, drinking, using illegal drugs, smoking in nonsmoking areas, and ignoring safety regulations
- incompetence—not demonstrating the knowledge, skills, experience, or attitude to perform the job responsibilities as requested

If you should ever find yourself out of a job unexpectedly, give yourself a couple days to recover from the shock. Then try to figure out why you were fired. Did you do or say something to contribute to the situation? Was your employer fair to you? Were there financial reasons that made the action necessary?

Be honest with yourself. If you did something you were not supposed to do, admit it. Do not lie or try to blame someone else. If you care about your future and career, you will not make the same mistake again.

Changes in job status cause employees to think about how their jobs fit their plan for the future. Usually changes in job status are positive events in employment history.
Making a Job Change

Look carefully at your job status and at your performance ratings. Are you in a dead-end job? You may wonder if it is best to “stick it out” or “move on.” At several points along your career, you will find yourself struggling with these questions: Should I stay with this job or find a new one? Should I leave this secure position and risk the uncertainties of another? Can I find or create my dream job right here, or must I work for someone else to achieve that goal?

In the United States, people tend to change jobs often, especially in their early years of employment. If you seem to be doing the same things over and over, then your career is not progressing and a new job may be what you need. See the clues in 19-11 to know when your career is stalled. The clues are explained here.

- **Your job responsibilities have not changed in three or four years.** If your name does not come up when a position opens, it is possible that management feels, for one or a number of reasons, you should stay in your present position.

- **Your responsibilities are reduced.** This may be a sign your job may be eliminated. Look for another way to become involved in the company, or start networking with colleagues at other companies and prepare your résumé.

- **You are not chosen for important projects or committees.** Management may feel you are a good, reliable worker, but does not consider you valuable for more challenging projects. Not participating in important committees and projects limits your exposure to the key people in the company.

- **You are passed over for promotions or you have been demoted.** Either situation is a definite clue your supervisor feels you should not have a job with more responsibility. It may be time to start looking for a job outside the company.

- **You are bored, find it hard to focus, and get little enjoyment from those things that once excited you.** If this happens every day, you may be happier with other responsibilities or another job. Everyone, however, has days that are frustrating or not very exciting.

- **Your relationships with the boss or coworkers are strained or deteriorated.** Personality clashes are part of life and something experienced by everyone. If these clashes lead to extreme unhappiness for anyone, it is important to try to resolve the differences. If they cannot be resolved, work is going to suffer and a change in job status may be next.

When you decide to change jobs, plan the change carefully. Avoid making a quick decision. Think about your career and future plans. Think about the reasons you want to leave your present job and the type of job you want next. What do you plan to accomplish by making a change? You should not just walk away. Make sure you have another job lined up before leaving the one you have.
If you decide to leave a job, you should try to leave on good terms. Quitting suddenly is not fair to your employer, and it will not leave your employer with a good impression of you. As a general rule, notify your supervisor in writing at least two weeks before you plan to leave. This will give your employer a chance to find another worker to replace you. Offer to train your replacement and finish all your work. If your job involves a great deal of responsibility and training, you should try to notify your employer even earlier.

You may be expected to give your employer an exit interview. This can provide the employer with information to help establish and maintain good working relationships with its employees. To prepare for your exit interview, make a list of positive comments regarding your employment. You may also want to share constructive criticisms that can be helpful to the employer in the future. It is best to be as positive as possible in an exit interview.

Do not bad-mouth anyone, even the boss. In this era of networking, your negative comments may travel back to the people you criticized. In the future, you will want the boss’s approval so you can use his or her name as a reference.

Although hopping from job to job is something you should avoid, changing jobs can be a very positive move to make. All too often people stay in jobs they dislike because they do not have the courage or ambition to look for other jobs. It takes considerable courage and drive to look for a new job and make a change, but the rewards can be well worth it. Feeling satisfied with your job will make you feel happier about your life and the work you accomplish.

**Unions**

To work in some occupations, workers are required to join a labor union. A union is a group of workers who have united to voice their opinions to their employer or the employer’s representatives (management). Ideally, the purpose of a union is to help workers be successful and secure on the job by bargaining with management for better wages, working hours, working conditions, and benefits.

Labor unions developed in the early days of industry because of poor working conditions, low wages, child labor, and unfair treatment of employees. By uniting together, workers found they gained strength and power to discuss these problems with management.

As a result of unions and changes in corporate attitudes, many of the problems that faced workers in the early 1900s have been solved. Workers are no longer faced with terrible working conditions. Laws have been passed to protect workers’ rights and safety. Management has learned over the years that satisfied workers are more productive workers, 19-12. More productive workers make companies successful and thereby yield higher profits.

For these reasons, many workers no longer need union membership to be treated and paid fairly. They no longer want to pay expensive union dues to support their local and national union organizations, especially when they hear about misused union funds. Some people believe unions have accomplished their original purposes and are no longer needed.

On the other hand, others feel that unions still serve a useful purpose. They continue to campaign for improved working conditions and increased wages and benefits. They help retrain workers whose jobs are assumed by automation. They also influence the legislation of labor and fair trade laws.
Must You Join a Union?

The answer to this question depends on the state in which you work and the kind of job you have. Some occupations do not have union affiliations. However, others require union membership.

If a workplace has a union shop agreement, all its workers must join the union as a condition of employment. In such cases, if you were hired by a company, you would not be able to work beyond a certain period unless you joined the union.

If a workplace has an open shop agreement, its workers are free to join or not join the union. Most unions oppose this type of agreement because they represent all workers in their negotiations. Therefore, they feel every worker should be required to join the union.

To find out what type of shop agreement a company has, call the company or check with your state’s labor department. If you have a choice about whether to join a union or not, do a little investigating first. To help decide if joining a union will benefit you at your job, answer key questions on the following topics:

- union’s track record—What has the union accomplished? What are its plans for the future?
- size of the workplace—Are there so many workers that the help of a union is needed to negotiate terms that benefit all?
- cost of union membership—What is the initial fee to join? What monthly or weekly dues are withheld from your paycheck?

Keep in mind that if you join a union, you must abide by union rules. You must be willing to give up some independence. If you have a complaint about work, you must follow a specific procedure for getting the problem solved. It is possible that you and your manager could easily solve the problem yourselves, but you must follow union rules. If the union votes to go on strike, whether you believe it should or not, you must support the decision and live with reduced pay or without a paycheck during the strike period.

Organization of Unions

Two major types of labor unions exist in the United States—craft unions and industrial unions.

- Craft unions are formed by workers who have the same craft or trade. There are craft unions for carpenters, painters, plumbers, electricians, and machinists. For example, the union for carpenters is called the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners. The union for electricians is the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW).
Industrial unions are formed by workers who belong to the same industry. Most industrial union members work in factories where cars, clothing, steel, and other products are made. The industrial union for autoworkers is called the United Automobile Workers (UAW). The union for apparel, garment, and textile workers is the National Apparel, Garment, and Textile Workers Council.

The basic work of unions is done in the locals. A local union has its own constitution, bylaws, and set of officers. The local union also elects shop stewards who handle members’ complaints about management.

National unions consist of many local unions. For example, the UAW has local unions practically everywhere cars are manufactured in the United States. Some national unions such as the UAW have more than a million members.

**Collective Bargaining**

Collective bargaining is the process of labor and management representatives discussing what they expect from each other in the workplace. In a way, collective bargaining is like a buyer and a seller debating the price of something to be sold. Labor may first demand much more than it expects to get. Management will offer much less than it intends to give.

Through debate, discussion, and possibly arguments, a compromise is finally reached in the form of a labor contract. A labor contract is an agreement that spells out the conditions for wages, benefits, job security, work hours, working conditions, and grievance procedures. A grievance procedure is a step-by-step list for handling complaints from union members.

Bargaining for a new contract can be a long process. It usually begins weeks or months before the date the existing contract expires. Representatives from management and labor each present their positions and demands. When an agreement is reached for a new work contract, union members vote to accept or reject it. If the membership rejects the contract, union representatives go back to the bargaining table and bargain for different terms.

If no agreement can be reached and the existing contract expires, there may be trouble. Sometimes union members will vote to strike until the company meets their demands or comes closer to their demands. On the other hand, management can threaten to close down the company unless an agreement is reached. Obviously, either action can be a loss to both labor and management. This is why it is important for both labor and management to be reasonable in their expectations.
Summary

Succeeding on the job involves many steps. You begin by learning your job duties and adjusting to the job. Getting along with your supervisor and coworkers will encourage teamwork, as well as make your job more enjoyable. Proper conduct will help you deal with most situations. Stress can affect your body, mind, and job performance unless you control and manage it.

Evaluating your job performance is one way for you to judge your success on the job. A performance rating by your supervisor helps show your strengths and weaknesses. Learn to recognize if your job is stalled. If you decide to change jobs, plan the change carefully. Consider your future plans and career before you leave.

Earning a job promotion is one step to job success. A lateral move is another. Getting a demotion or losing a job can be an unpleasant experience. However, try to learn from the experience and avoid repeating mistakes.

Unions were developed to help workers be successful and secure in their jobs. Representatives of labor and management discuss work expectations through the process of collective bargaining. Decide whether joining a union benefits you. For some jobs, union membership is required.

Facts in Review

1. How can you prepare for your first day on the job?
2. Name six rules of proper employee conduct.
3. What is the main cause of stress?
4. Name an effect of positive stress.
5. What questions can help you determine if you are having success on the job?
6. What does it mean for a worker to be hired on a probationary basis?
7. What is the purpose of performance ratings for the employer and the employee?
8. List the four types of changes possible in job status.
9. List the most common reasons employers give for firing employees.
10. What are six indicators your job or career may be stalled?
11. How much notice should you give your supervisor before leaving a job?
12. Why were labor unions originally formed?
13. If you have a choice, what should you consider before joining a union?
14. Explain the difference between a union shop agreement and an open shop agreement.
15. Describe the two major types of labor unions that exist in the United States.
Developing Your Academic Skills

1. **Science.** Form groups and research stress management techniques. Give group presentations to the class demonstrating some of the techniques your group has studied. Discuss how some techniques might be performed during stressful moments on the job.

2. **Social Studies.** Research the history of unions in the United States. How are unions different today from unions of the past? Are the changes beneficial to the workers, the employers, or both? Summarize your findings in a written report.

Applying Your Knowledge and Skills

1. **Problem Solving and Critical Thinking.** List five reasons why you think you are succeeding at your work-based learning experience. Also list five ways you can improve your job performance. Then, working with three classmates, share your lists and discuss ways each person in the group can improve his or her job performance.

2. **Employability and Career Development.** Invite a local employer or an employee in a supervisory position to class to discuss two topics: how to avoid the common problems of new employees and how to prepare for a supervisory position.

3. **Communications.** Talk to three people who recently changed jobs. Find out why and how each person changed his or her job and what each hopes to accomplish in the new job. Are there any similarities in the answers given by the three workers? Do you feel each person made a good decision? Be prepared to discuss your findings in class.

Information Technology Applications

1. Use a spreadsheet program to create a self-evaluation sheet you could use to rate your job performance. Devise a system of rating, such as 4 for excellent, 3 for good, 2 for adequate, and 1 for poor. You may use some of the criteria listed on page 391. Use spreadsheet commands to find an average rating number for your overall performance.

2. Search the Internet for information on a recent, well-publicized strike. What conditions brought about the strike? How was the strike resolved? Did the union members accomplish their goals by striking? Summarize your findings in an oral report.

Developing Workplace Skills

Working with three classmates, develop a 10-minute role-play that demonstrates the rules of proper conduct in the workplace and perform the role-play for the class. The role-play should include examples of workers who do follow the rules plus those who do not. Working with the members of your group, decide how to divide the tasks. (Everyone need not be involved in every task.)