

# Career & Education Wellness

## COURSE OFFERINGS

### FOR EMPLOYEES

#### Professional Growth and Career Planning (7-part series)

In this workshop series, you'll discover your interests, needs, and strengths to enhance your career path. You'll build a proactive professional development plan that includes goals, milestones, and practical and meaningful education that will have a real impact on your current position and organization.

Each section of this series is designed to build upon the previous sections, but each may also be taken separately.

Course offerings will strengthen your workforce by supporting employees in expanding the skills they bring to work every day. We cover several topics, including career plans, financial aid options, and repayment information.

##### **Part 1: Assessing Your Current Work Situation**

You'll work on the "4 Cs" to clarify the content, conditions, compensation, and congruence in your current work situation. You'll identify areas you'd like to change or develop and then create action steps to address those areas.

##### **Part 2: Career Self-Assessment and Transferable Skills**

Utilizing an assessment tool, you'll evaluate your current skill levels and identify areas for further development. You'll then build action steps—including professional development activities, further education, supervision, and mentoring—that are aligned with your company's needs so you can improve the skills you want to develop.

##### **Part 3: Personality and Career Choice**

You'll identify and assess your personality preferences using a variety of tools. You'll then work to relate to your personality preferences to your current work situation and create realistic plans to maximize your productivity and performance based on these preferences.

##### **Part 4: Identifying Career Interests and Energy Builders**

In this workshop, you'll first use an interest assessment tool to identify your interests and "energy builders," and then clarify your career interests and the activities that motivate and engage you. Along the way, you'll create action steps to incorporate your interests and energy builders into your work environment.

##### **Part 5: Returning to Learning**

You'll explore education, training, and financial options relevant to working adults and will clarify options that assist you in enhancing your current work situation.

A Benefit for Your Employees  
& Their Families

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One-to-one counseling/  
coaching sessions, to  
focus on individual  
needs, can be a part of  
the services available  
with this program.

### **Part 6: Developing Mentor Relationships and Professional Networks**

You'll learn how to develop mentor relationships and professional networks that maximize your work performance and opportunities, and you'll build a plan of action that includes activities such as information interviewing and job shadowing.

### **Part 7: Creating a Professional Portfolio and Resumé**

In this workshop, you'll clarify the purpose and value of maintaining a professional portfolio. We'll cover ways to identify the specific documents that you may want to include and will get you started on creating a portfolio as a "living document."

## **Financial Aid for Education**

In this workshop, you'll explore options to pay for continued education or a degree. We'll cover full-time and part-time enrollment, and how to apply for federal student aid, including obtaining a Federal Student Aid ID and completing necessary financial aid applications and forms. You'll also learn about Vermont degree and non-degree grants from VSAC, along with scholarships that you may be eligible for.

## **Student Loan Repayment (3-part series)**

This series of workshops is designed to give you the information and tools you need to navigate student loan repayment and to understand whether there's a federal student loan forgiveness option for you.

### **Part 1: Student Loan Repayment Basics**

This introductory workshop will provide an overview of terms and federal repayment programs. You'll leave with tools to find your "servicer," ways to identify type of loans you may have, and other key information that will assist in preparation for the next two workshops in this series or your own personal plan for navigating your student loan repayment options.

### **Part 2: Loan Forgiveness Programs**

In this session, you'll learn about federally sponsored student loan forgiveness and the specific situations that may make you eligible. Programs include Teacher Loan Forgiveness, Public Service Loan Forgiveness, and forgiveness associated with income-driven repayment plans. As a follow-up to this workshop, individual sessions are available to address individual circumstances.

### **Part 3: Public Service Loan Forgiveness**

Building on the knowledge you gained in the broad loan forgiveness workshop above, this workshop will break down all the requirements on qualifying and applying for Public Service Loan Forgiveness. You'll leave this workshop with contact information and additional resources to assist you in the application process. As a follow-up to this workshop, individual sessions are available to address individual circumstances.

## **Navigating Student Loan Default**

Are you struggling to make your student loan payments and concerned that you may default? Or are you already in default? This workshop will help you understand the implications of being delinquent or in default. You'll gain an understanding of the options for managing student loan default and hear about scenarios for getting out of default and improving your credit history. One-on-one sessions will be available as follow-through from this workshop.

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## WITH OUR PARTNERS

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### Assessment of Prior Learning: Get Credit for What You Already Know

In this session, learn about a Vermont State Colleges System program that helps adults receive college credit for learning acquired outside of the college classroom. You'll hear about the options for documenting your prior learning through portfolios, standardized testing, and course challenges that will save money as you move closer to your education goals.



We continue to expand our workshops to include offerings from our public and nonprofit partners. As a result, we're proud to share these collaborative workshops.

### Information Technology Apprenticeship Readiness (ITAR)

What is Information Technology Apprenticeship Readiness (ITAR), and how does it address both the needs of employers and the needs of the student participants? Join this workshop to learn about the ITAR model pioneered by Vermont HITEC and the ways it's addressed employers and employee needs across a wide range of occupations, including healthcare, IT, advanced manufacturing, business services, and others. This workshop was designed for parents looking to position their students to be able to take advantage of ITAR and for organizational leaders interested in exploring a Vermont HITEC partnership.



### Continuing Education & Workforce Development at Vermont Tech

This workshop will introduce you to a unique experience of focused, hands-on, and applied learning offered by the Office of Continuing Education and Workforce Development at Vermont Tech. From this session you'll learn whether this program, which focuses on education and training through customized workshops and courses, is the right fit for you or your student on a path to a certificate or degree program. Current available courses focus on healthcare facilities, state agencies, nonprofits, small businesses, manufacturers, service industries, educators, municipal government, builders, and contractors.



### The Governor's Institutes of Vermont

Come see what the Governor's Institutes can do for your motivated young learner! If you have a high school student (or future high schooler) in your life, these unique accelerated academic programs on college campuses can be key in shaping their thinking about college, majors, peers, and careers. Discover the many topics offered—from coding, engineering, and entrepreneurship to writing, art, music, and current issues—and learn about the application process and sliding scale tuition that make Governor's Institutes affordable for all Vermont families.



## Financial Education and Literacy Series: Presented by Opportunities Credit Union's Money Sense and Career & Education Wellness

This unique and vital series will bring you the resources you need to increase your base knowledge of financial terms, pathways, and planning options. Financial education and awareness are vital to the health of individuals. People need to be confident in the money decisions they make today in order to feel secure about their financial future. Increasing financial literacy, like any type of knowledge, empowers individuals to make informed choices and begin practicing financial fitness by understanding the relationship between spending and saving. When individuals become more financially informed, they have more flexibility, reduce their stress, and improve their relationships.



### Part 1: Budgeting

Financial education is the basis of understanding yourself as a consumer and how financial resources work. This workshop will give you the skills to make a budget, to understand how it relates to your income and your ability to avoid debt, to plan for emergencies, and to save money, giving you peace of mind today and in the future. You'll learn the vocabulary of financial literacy and gain financial skills that will empower you to identify and meet your financial goals.

### Part 2: Credit

Having a good credit score is vital for everyone in today's world. Lenders require certain credit scores for credit cards, car loans, and mortgages. Landlords, utility companies, and employers also look at credit history to judge how trustworthy you are with your money. It's important to understand what your credit report is saying and to learn how it's translated into your credit score. In this workshop, we'll go through all components of a credit report and the factors that have an impact on your credit score. We'll address ways to build or improve your credit score to get lower rates for mortgages, credit cards, car loans, student loans, and much more.

### Part 3: Financial Aid for Education

In this workshop, you'll explore options to pay for continued education or a degree. We'll cover full-time and part-time enrollment, and how to apply for federal student aid, including obtaining a Federal Student Aid ID and completing necessary financial aid applications and forms. You'll also learn about Vermont degree and non-degree grants from VSAC, along with scholarships that you may be eligible for.

### Part 4: Loans

Understanding a loan offer is vital to making good long-term financial decisions. This workshop will define commonly used loan terms and offer examples on the different factors that affect the overall cost of a loan. We'll also address what happens when a loan is not paid and how to deal with collections.

### Part 5: Homebuying

Purchasing a home is a financial goal from many households in the U.S. This workshop will cover the process and timeline of buying a house. We'll prepare you for what lenders look for on a loan application, and we'll break down commonly used terms. In this workshop, we'll also use real world numbers to demonstrate different scenarios of affordability.

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## FOR EMPLOYEES' CHILDREN & FAMILIES

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### Navigating the Vermont Public School System (4-part series)

This 4-part series delves into the workings of our public school systems and offers practical suggestions for ways you can support and advocate for your children as they progress through the K–12 system in Vermont.

#### **Part 1: Navigating the School System: Common Core**

This session provides an overview of Common Core, covering a basic understanding of these standards and how they may be reflected on your child's report card. The session will enable you to have a better connection with your child and their school work, and the teachers in your school system.

#### **Part 2: Navigating the School System: Personal Learning Plans**

This session offers an overview of PLPs, which began implementation in the fall of 2015. You'll learn what PLPs are and why they're used, and will gain an understanding of the role you play in developing a PLP for your child(ren).

#### **Part 3: Navigating the School System: Vermont Act 77-Flexible Pathways**

There are 4 main components of Flexible Pathways, and this workshop provides an understanding of all of them: dual enrollment, early college, work-based learning, and the role of PLPs in developing these paths for your child(ren).

#### **Part 4: Navigating the School System: Proficiency-Based Learning and Diplomas**

What does being "career and college ready" mean in terms of students graduating and transitioning to living independent and successful lives? In this workshop, we'll explain proficiency-based learning and requirements for graduation.

### Guiding Your Child(ren) from Birth through High School (4-part series)

This 4-part series concentrates on the different developmental stages of children from pre-school to high school and the ways that this knowledge helps you to assist your child(ren). We'll explore the transition from one stage of education to the next; you'll leave with tips, strategies, conversation starters, and practical information that will support both you and your child(ren) in this important journey.

#### **Part 1: From Birth to Pre-School**

With the current expectations put on young children entering the public school system, how do you support children in just being kids and yet still get them ready for school? This workshop will provide an overview of pre-school and kindergarten readiness, along with fun, easy ways to support your child(ren) by cultivating a love of learning.

#### **Part 2: Elementary School**

In this session, you'll learn strategies, tips, and activities to use with your elementary school children to promote engagement in learning and establish successful learning habits that will prepare them for the expectations that await them in middle school and beyond.

"Thank you for all this information. Planning for college/career is so overwhelming, and I feel like you've given me a path, so really, thank you very much."

*Workshop attendee*

Course offerings are designed specifically to address the needs of employees with children in Vermont school systems and to provide support through career and college planning, enrollment, and success.

### **Part 3: Middle School**

This session focuses on strategies for supporting middle schoolers in being successful in school and for preparing them for the rigor of and transition to high school. You'll leave the workshop with ideas and resources to use with your middle schooler to build on their interests and passions.

### **Part 4: High School**

This workshop focuses on the complex task of communicating with and supporting your child(ren) in high school. You'll leave with strategies and resources to navigate the high school experience with your child(ren) and assist them in being prepared for training or college after high school.

## **Testing**

This workshop will demystify standardized testing: What do the acronyms mean, and what is being tested? What are the SBAC, SAT, and ACT? How can my child(ren) prepare for testing? How do I interpret the scores, identify next steps, and support my child(ren) in those steps? How does testing affect college and other education opportunities after high school? Follow-up sessions are available to discuss individual testing results.

## **Helping My Student Find Their Path**

Discover strategies and tools to guide conversations and exploration with your son or daughter to discover interests, strengths, and passions; then research potential career paths and a potential education plan that supports that path.

## **Paying for College (4-part series)**

This 4-part series offers information pertaining to paying for college, setting up an FSA account (with Federal Student Aid), and completing applications, as well as understanding financial aid award letters.

### **Part 1: Saving for College or Training after High School**

Come to this session to learn about 529 college savings plans and to understand why it's a misconception that it will hurt you to save for college. This session also covers the difference between "net price" and "sticker price" of college.

### **Part 2: Types of Financial Aid**

In this session, you'll learn what grants, loans, merit aid, and scholarships are and will leave with necessary information and resources to support your child(ren) in building the mix of financial resources and plans needed to attend training or college after high school.

### **Part 3: The Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA)**

The FAFSA is the primary starting point for financial aid. We'll train you to set up an FSA account, understand how to complete the FAFSA, and identify the information you'll need. We'll also include tips on how to keep track of financial aid deadlines.

#### **Part 4: Understanding Financial Aid Award Letters**

How do you read an award letter? In this workshop, you'll learn how to interpret the many important parts of an award letter, including aid that needs to be paid back (loans) and aid that does not (grants and scholarships). In addition, we'll share important online tools that you can utilize with your child(ren) to compare financial aid award letters and make an informed choice regarding college offers.

### **Careers**

This workshop focuses on career and training programs, as well as opportunities for young adults who've determined that a 4-year college isn't right for them at this time. What's available to students to enable them to join an ever-changing work force, and how do they go about finding programs and possible career options? Join this training to gather information and make a connection to VSAC resources in your area.

To learn more,  
contact VSAC's  
career & education  
wellness program.

**E-mail:**  
[cew@vsac.org](mailto:cew@vsac.org)

**Phone:**  
(802) 654-3786

### **College (4-part series)**

This 4-part series provides an overview of how to choose a college. It will provide a discussion of cost, the admissions process for college, and an introduction to the "gap year." You'll take away knowledge on the best practices for you, as a parent, once your child is attending college and how best to provide support when challenges occur.

#### **Part 1: The Right Fit**

This session focuses on how to find the right fit when looking for a college. We'll delve into the questions you should ask and where to find answers in choosing an institution or program that will prepare your young person for life.

#### **Part 2: The Application Process**

Learn about the application process for college: What should my child(ren) be doing, and when should they be doing it? You'll walk away with specific conversations to have with your child(ren), as well as tools that will assist in meeting deadlines.

#### **Part 3: Gap Year and Volunteer Experiences**

This session explains what a gap year is and what it isn't, and why it's important to plan. We'll provide you with resources to help you and your child explore options and formal programs. You'll leave with information that will assist you and your child in deciding what type of experience is the best fit.

#### **Part 4: What is My Role (Now That My Student Is in College)?**

This workshop provides suggestions and tips on supporting your young adult in their new adventure as a college student without being a "helicopter parent." You'll learn what the role of a new college parent looks like and how best to support your child in making a successful transition to independence, while having your support when it's really needed.

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