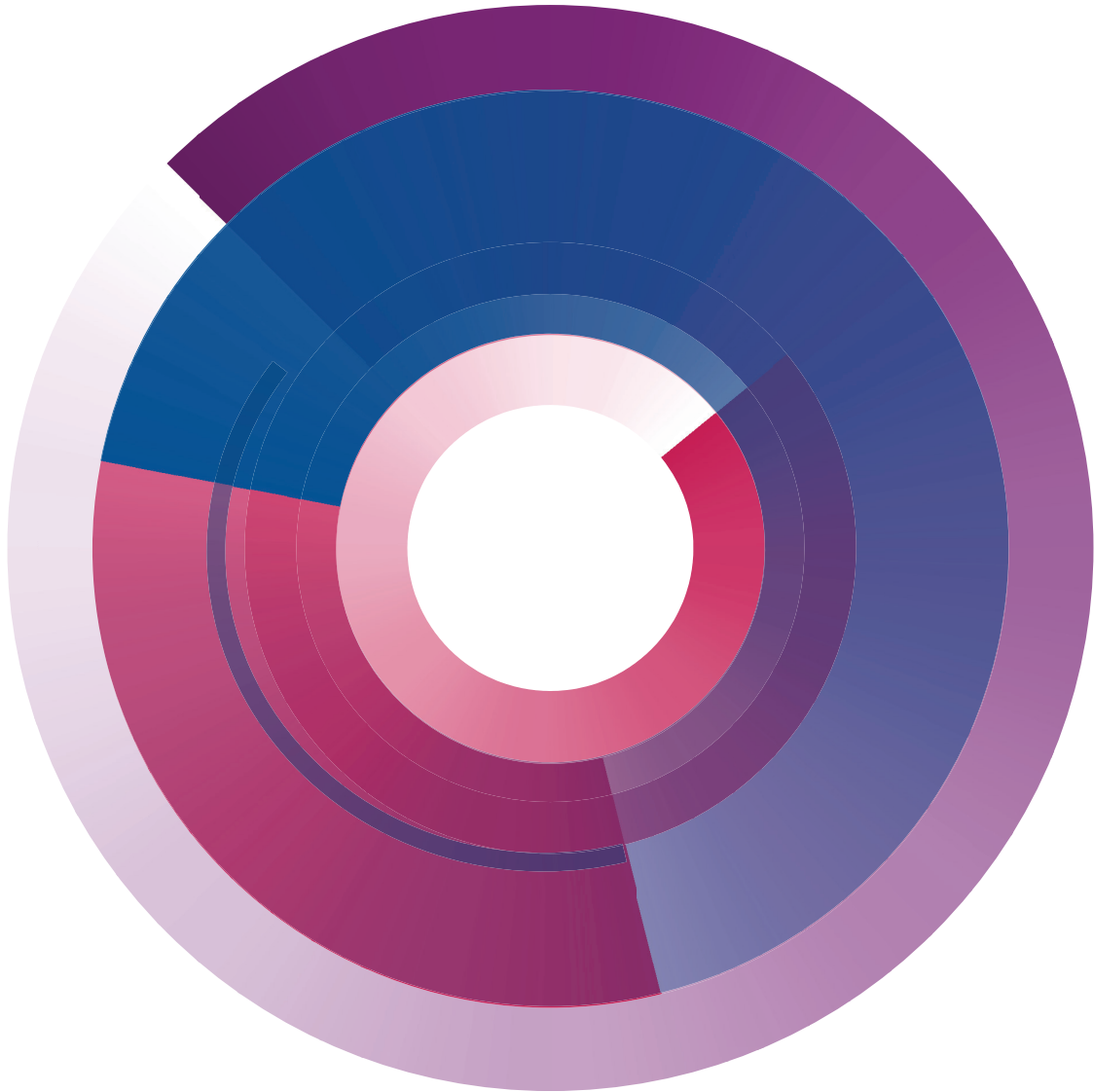


Adaptability

UNIT 2: PASSING THE PROBATIONARY PERIOD



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UNIT 2:

Passing the probationary period

Welcome to this unit on adaptability!

Adaptability is your ability to respond to situations that are new or challenging for you.

You show that you can adapt when you help your body adjust to hard physical work, learn from your mistakes and adapt to the new workplace culture.

Research shows that adaptability is an important skill for work and for life. The tasks that you complete in this unit will help you start a new job and pass your probationary period successfully.

You will read about Janet and Kim. They have started new jobs and are in the probationary period. They are both struggling to adapt to their new workplace. They need strategies to do it effectively.

Learning outcomes

After completing this unit, you will be able to:

- Identify when you may need to adapt when you start a new job
- Identify the purpose for adapting
- Use strategies to adapt

Vocabulary

Probationary period: the first three to six months of employment. This is when you learn the job. It gives you and the employer time to decide if the job is a good fit.

Workplace culture: how people in the workplace think, communicate and approach their work. This is what makes it different from other workplaces.

Adapting to pass the probationary period

Starting a new job can be exciting and challenging at the same time. It can be exciting because you start something new and fresh. It can be challenging because you come from a different job or have been unemployed for some time. There are many things you will need to adapt to when you start a new job.

Below are examples of how you can adapt.

Give yourself time

When you start a new job, you may think that your employer wants you to know everything. However, when you find out how much you need to learn, you may feel overwhelmed and worry that you aren't a good fit for the job. You may even worry that you will lose your job. You can adapt by changing the way you look at it. Give yourself time to learn your new job. It's important to make progress, but it's okay if you don't know everything.

Help your body adapt

When you start a new job, you may feel tired and sore if you have to stand or move around a lot during your shift. You may think that the job is too hard to handle. You can adapt by exercising and resting.

Learn from your mistakes

When you start a new job, you may make more mistakes than others. When you make a lot of mistakes, you may think that your co-workers and employer will doubt your skills. You can adapt by learning from your mistakes and thinking about how you can do better next time. It's okay to make mistakes, especially when you are in a new job.

Ask your employer to accommodate your needs

When you start a new job, you may need your employer's help to adapt to the new workplace. This could be if you have a disability or you need to take a family member to doctor's appointments. You can adapt by asking your employer to accommodate your needs.

Vocabulary

Accommodate: make changes to meet a worker's needs. For example, your employer may change a break time for your medical needs.

Self-evaluation

This self-evaluation asks you to think about your adaptability skills. Answer the questions as honestly as you can. This will help your facilitator target the tasks to your needs.

Self-evaluation is a way to reflect on your experiences, thoughts and emotions.



It helps you understand yourself better, shows your strengths and identifies areas you need to improve.

Self-evaluation 1

How well can you do these activities?

Activity	Not at all well	Not very well	Pretty well	Very well	Extremely well
1. I can take care of my body when I do hard physical work such as heavy lifting or standing for a long time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I can learn from my mistakes..	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I can adjust the way I communicate to understand instructions better.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I can remember a lot of new information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Self-evaluation 2

How well can you do these activities?

Activity	Not at all well	Not very well	Pretty well	Very well	Extremely well
1. I can change my habits and routine to focus on my job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I can adapt to the new workplace culture.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I can ask my employer to accommodate my needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I can stay positive when things don't go the way I planned or expected.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Self-evaluations adapted from SRDC – OLES Measurement Tool: COMSA Survey Builder (srdc.org)

Janet's story

Janet just started a job as a general labourer in a construction company. She is in the probationary period.

It's her first job in this field. She likes the job, but she is having some challenges.

She must be physically active in the job. She stands for long periods of time, moves around a lot and carries heavy material. By the time Janet gets home, she is very tired and sore. She doesn't have energy to spend time with her family.

Janet needs to learn how to do a lot of tasks. The information is new to her. She can't remember everything. She has already made a few mistakes. She tried to hide the mistakes because she was scared that she could lose her job.

Janet is having trouble understanding instructions. Sometimes she doesn't understand because her co-workers and supervisor speak too fast for her. Sometimes it's because there are too many steps to remember. She doesn't ask questions when she doesn't know what to do. Janet makes mistakes because of this.

The job pays well, and Janet likes working with her hands. However, she isn't sure if she wants to keep it because of the challenges. She needs help to adapt to her workplace and make a decision.



What to adapt to? Identify areas

Janet wants to pass her probationary period and succeed in the job. To do this, she needs to adapt to the new job and workplace.

What does Janet need to adapt to?

TASK

Answer the questions.

1. Which are the three areas where Janet needs to adapt?

Circle your answers.

- a. Communicating to understand instructions
- b. Going to work every day
- c. Doing a lot of hard physical work
- d. Remembering a lot of new information

2. What is one example that shows Janet needs to make sure she understands instructions?

3. What is one example that shows Janet needs to handle a lot of new information better?

4. What is one example that shows Janet needs to adapt to the hard physical work?

REFLECT

Think of a new job or volunteer experience you had.

- How is Janet's experience similar to your own?
- Are there any differences? What are they?
- What were three new things you had to adapt to?

Think of your future job.

What are three new things you may need to adapt to?


What does adapting look like? Identify actions

What actions could Janet take to adapt?

TASK

Draw a line to match the area for change with an action.

We have done the first one as an example.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Janet feels tired and sore when she gets home. | a. She could learn on the job. |
| 2. Janet is not sure she is a good fit for the job. | b. She could find a way to keep track of the information she gets. |
| 3. Janet doesn't know everything about the job. | c. She could find ways to take care of her body. |
| 4. Janet doesn't ask questions to understand instructions. | d. She could change the way she communicates to understand instructions better. |
| 5. Janet can't remember all the new information. | e. She could look at both the good and bad things about the job before she decides. |
- 

REFLECT

Think of the new job or volunteer experience that you had.

What did you do to adapt to the three new things?

Think of one action for each.


Think of your future job.

What would you do to adapt to the three new things?

Think of one action for each.

Why adapt? Identify the purpose

The probationary period is one of the most important times in your job. You need to learn a lot of new things and find your place in the team. You need to make a lot of effort to adapt. You can get overwhelmed and lose motivation. When you remember why you need to adapt, you can stay motivated. You can focus on your goal to learn the job, perform well and pass your probationary period.



Each time you adapt, you will get closer to your goal. For example, if you stretch and exercise every day, it will become easier for your body to handle the hard physical work. If you have a hot bath when you get home after work, your body will get a chance to relax. The next day, you will have more energy and can focus on your tasks better.

Janet wants to pass her probationary period and succeed in the job. She isn't sure if she is a good fit for the job. It's okay to feel that way. There are many things she needs to adapt to. Each time Janet adapts, she will do better in her job.

If Janet remembers how she will benefit if she adapts, she will stay motivated and focus on her goal.

Why should Janet adapt?

TASK

Complete the sentences with your ideas. You can write more than one idea.

We have done the first one as an example.

1. If Janet prepares herself for hard physical work:

she will have more energy to complete tasks. If Janet doesn't feel tired, it will be easier for her to do the work. She will be able to stay positive about working in her new job.

2. If Janet gives herself enough time to learn the job:

3. If Janet handles new information better:

4. If Janet learns from her mistakes:

5. If Janet understand instructions better:

REFLECT

Think of your future job.

Why will it be important to adapt to the three new things?

Think of at least one purpose for each.

How can you adapt effectively? Identify and practise strategies

Adaptability is one of the most important skills to use during your probationary period. You may need to learn a lot on the job, adjust to a hard physical job or change the way you communicate so you can understand instructions better.

It can be hard when you need to adapt to so many things at the same time, but there are many strategies that can help you. Why not use them and see what happens!



REFLECT

Think of the challenges that Janet is facing.

How can she adapt better?

Do you know of any strategies she could use?

Strategies to help your body adapt

When you do hard physical work, you are on your feet most of the time. You lift, push and climb all day. If your body isn't used to it, your muscles will get sore. You may feel tired and

want to sit or lie down all the time. It's okay if you feel like that. It's your body responding to the change. It needs time to adjust. It slowly becomes easier to handle the job.



Janet feels very tired when she gets home. She needs strategies to help her body adapt.

Here are some that can help:

Stretch and exercise

Stretch and exercise for at least 15 minutes every day. This keeps your muscles flexible, strong and ready to do physical activity. It will be easier for you to move around, push and lift heavy things.

Take a hot bath

Take a hot bath when you come home from work. It helps your muscles relax and recover. It also improves your mood. When your body gets the chance to relax, it is ready to perform tasks the next day.

Get enough sleep

Get enough sleep to allow your body to recover. Research shows that people who get enough sleep think clearly and do well at work. Getting enough sleep helps you follow instructions well and remember the steps to perform tasks.

Drink plenty of water and eat healthy food

Make sure to drink water all through the day.

Eat food that is high in protein like eggs, beans and nuts. It's also important to eat food that is rich in vitamins like fruits and vegetables.

Don't eat too much junk food, sugar and salt. They can make you feel tired.

When you take care of your body, you also take care of your mind.

You are more able to think clearly, follow instructions and remember how to do tasks.



REFLECT

Think of a time when you did hard physical work.

- How long did you have to do it?
- How did your body feel?
- What did you do to help your body adapt?
- What are two strategies that you could use next time you do that work?

Strategies to learn on the job

When you start a new job, most employers don't expect you to know everything. Learning mostly happens on the job. That's why you hear

a lot of new information and instructions. You may get tired and forget some information. That's okay! It takes time to learn the job.



This is Janet's first job as a general labourer. She must learn a lot. She forgets some of the new information and makes mistakes. She needs strategies to learn on the job effectively.

Here are some that can help:

Write down details

Write down your co-workers' names, instructions, quantities of items, new words, useful tips and phone numbers. Then, when you are not sure or you forget something, you can look for the information in your notebook.

You won't have to ask the same question again. You can ask your co-workers or supervisor if you need to get more information

Writing down details

is a transferable skill. Use it in your employment program, in your job and in your daily life.

Learn from your mistakes

Don't be scared of making mistakes. All workers make mistakes. It's normal to make more mistakes than others when you are a new employee. You are still learning. Admit your mistake. Apologize if it has caused any problems. Don't blame it on others.

Look for ways to learn

Look for new ways to learn all the time. Learning begins when you start your job, but it never ends.

Here are some ways you can learn:

- Watch a more experienced co-worker to learn from them. For example, if you work in a grocery store, you can watch how they speak to difficult customers.
- Watch videos. For example, if you work in construction, you can watch videos on YouTube about health and safety or how to mix concrete.
- Ask if the company offers other training. For example, if you work in manufacturing, you could ask for forklift training.

Learning on the job is very important. It can help you learn more skills, pass your probationary period and get promoted!

TASK

What could Janet do?

Write your answers.

1. Janet wants to remember the tips her supervisor gives her.

2. Janet's supervisor points out a mistake she has made.

3. Janet wants to learn more about quick-drying and slow-drying concrete.

4. Janet forgot some of the information she got from her supervisor.

REFLECT

Think of a time when you learned something new.

What two strategies did you use to learn effectively?

Think of your future job.

- How do you feel about learning a lot of new information?
- What two strategies will you use to learn effectively?

Strategies to understand instructions



You learn how to do the job through communication. It's important to understand instructions so you can do the job well and safely. There can be times when you don't understand. That's okay. You can adjust the way you communicate. You can also ask your co-workers to adjust the way they communicate.

Sometimes Janet makes mistakes. She needs strategies to understand instructions better.

Here are some that can help:

Explain that you don't understand

- Sorry, I didn't understand.
- I'm sorry, I didn't catch that.

Ask your co-workers to repeat

- Can you please repeat that?
- Could you say that again?

Ask your co-workers to speak slower

- Can you speak slowly please?
- Could you slow down a little bit?

Repeat the information back to make sure you understand

- So, we always put the heavier things on the bottom. Is that right?
- So, you mean that I shouldn't use hot water to mix fast-drying concrete, right?

Ask for feedback

- Can you please check if I got this right?
- Would you have time to double-check this?

Use polite words

Don't just say:

Say that again.

Repeat that.

Check this.

Say:

Sorry, could you say that again?

Could you please repeat that?

I'm wondering if you could check this.

TASK

Janet is getting instructions from Miguel, her supervisor. She wants to use strategies to understand his instructions better.

What could Janet say?

Write your answers.

Miguel: When you are installing shingles, it is really important that you pay attention to the minimum offset required. The offset depends on the style of shingles. The package will tell you exactly how much total offset is required for each row. Each row of a set of five will need different offsets. You will need to cut the shingles according to the prescribed length.

Miguel spoke too fast for Janet. She didn't catch all the instructions.

Janet:

Janet doesn't understand what "total offset" means.

Janet:

Miguel: This style has a set of five. It starts with 21 inches, which is a full shingle. The second row will be 18.5 inches, the third one will be 15.5 inches, the fourth one will be 11 inches and the last row will be 8.5 inches. This is a set of five, and you just must repeat the pattern.

Janet doesn't understand what "repeat the pattern" means.

Janet:

Janet wants to know if she got the measurements right.

Janet:

Miguel: Make sure you have your materials and tools ready before you mix the concrete. Pour the concrete into the bucket, get some water and a trowel. When you pour the water, go slow. When you mix it, get down to the bottom and the sides.

Janet wants to make sure she remembers what materials and tools she needs before she mixes the concrete.

Janet:

Janet repeats Miguel's instructions to make sure she understood correctly.

Janet:

REFLECT

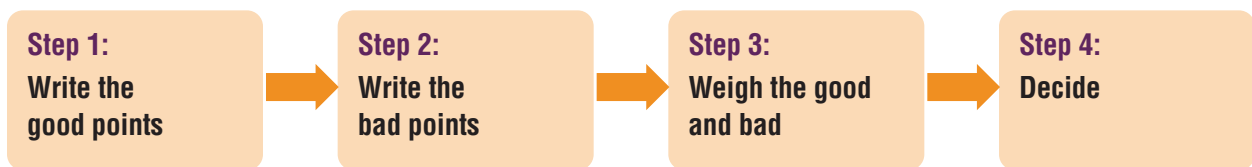
- How do you feel about asking others when you do not understand something?
- What are two strategies that you can use to communicate well at work?

Practise making decisions

When we need to make a decision, it can be hard to see things clearly. We may focus on only one side of a situation.

Before you decide, you can make a list to weigh the good and bad. This means to think carefully about both the positives and negatives of a situation. When you see both sides, you can make a better decision.

Follow these steps to help you make a decision:



How Janet can use the steps to make a decision

Janet isn't sure if she should stay in the job. She feels overwhelmed and has some challenges, so she focuses on the bad things about her job. She can make a list to weigh the good and bad sides of her job. This will help her make a better decision.

Step 1: Write the good points

Janet writes the good things about the job under "Good".

Good	Bad
I can stay fit because I move around all the time.	
I can build things.	
I get to use a lot of tools.	
I can earn more income than in other jobs.	
I can grow in my job.	
I like to build homes for people.	
I can fix things around the house without paying anyone.	

Step 2: Write the bad points

Janet writes the bad things about the job under “Bad”.

Good	Bad
I will become more fit because I move around all the time.	I have to be careful all the time because there are a lot of hazards.
I can build things.	Sometimes I have to work long hours.
I get to use a lot of tools.	I may have to work outside in bad weather.
I can earn more income than in other jobs.	Sometimes I can't remember the new information.
I can grow in my job.	
I like to build homes for people.	
I can fix things around the house without paying anyone.	

Step 3: Weigh the good and bad

Janet sees that the good points outweigh the bad. The benefits are more important to her than the negative things about the job. She can use strategies to handle the negative things.

Step 4: Decide

After thinking about both the good and bad sides of her job, Janet decides to stay.

Looking at both the good and bad sides of a situation is a transferable skill. Use it in your employment program, in your job and in your daily life.

TASK

Think of a hard decision that you need to make.

What I need to decide: _____

Follow the steps to help you decide.

Step 1: Write the good points

Write all the good things that would happen if you make the decision.

Step 2: Write the bad points

Write all the bad things that would happen if you make the decision.

Good	Bad

Step 3: Weigh the good and bad

Ask yourself:

- Do the good points outweigh the bad?
- Are the benefits more important to me than the negative things about it?
- Can I use strategies to handle the negative things?

Step 4: Decide

After you think about both sides of the situation, make your decision.

My decision: _____

Apply what you've learned

Now that you know more about how to adapt, how would you handle the following situations?

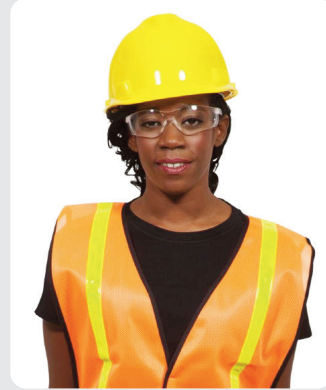
Circle two answers.

1. You just started a job as a production support worker. The job requires hard physical work. You aren't used to it. When you get home, you are very tired.
 - a. I would get enough sleep to have energy the next day.
 - b. I would quit the job. It's not a good fit.
 - c. I would take hot baths and stretch every day to help my body adjust.
2. Your co-worker is giving you instructions. They are speaking too fast for you. You can't understand some of the instructions.
 - a. I would say, "That's not how you give instructions to new hires."
 - b. I would say, "Could you please repeat that for me?"
 - c. I would say, "Can you please say that more slowly. I'm taking notes."
3. Your supervisor gave you instructions and showed you how to do a task. Now you need to do it on your own.
 - a. I would repeat the instructions back to make sure I understand how to do it before I start.
 - b. I would do as much as I understood. It's my first time doing it anyway.
 - c. I would listen and look carefully. Then I would ask questions.
4. Your co-worker uses new words when explaining how to do a task. You don't understand most of the instructions.
 - a. I would stop paying attention. I don't understand anyway.
 - b. I would ask them to explain the new words to me.
 - c. I would write the new words and their meanings in my notebook.
5. You passed the WHMIS test at the health and safety training. However, you aren't sure you remember all the WHMIS symbols and what kind of hazards they show.
 - a. I would find and watch YouTube videos on WHMIS.
 - b. I wouldn't worry too much. I won't be handling hazardous materials every day.
 - c. I would find and read information about WHMIS in the training materials.

Kim's story

Kim just started a job as a helper in an auto body shop. She is in the probationary period. She likes the job, but she is having some challenges.

The shop is noisy. Kim needs to listen to music to focus but it's not allowed. She is worried that she won't be able to do the job without listening to music. Kim also needs to take extra breaks for health reasons. She isn't sure if the employer will accommodate that. She isn't used to speaking up about her needs.



The policies and procedures in the shop are different from her previous job. She isn't used to the strict safety procedures. In her previous job, Kim didn't need to talk to customers, but now she has to. She often does things the old way because she forgets or doesn't know how things work. She's made mistakes because of this.

In the past, Kim worked as an order picker. She worked mostly on her own. Here, many of the tasks require teamwork, communication and collaboration.

The workplace culture in the shop is different too. Workers talk to each other like friends. They share things and joke a lot. Kim isn't used to this.

Most of the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) is too big for Kim. She isn't sure if the employer has the right size of PPE for her. She isn't sure if she should ask.

Kim loves to work with vehicles. She wants to keep this job but there are days when she feels it's too much to handle and she wants to give up. She isn't sure if it's worth trying to adapt to the new ways. If Kim decides to stay, she will need help to adapt to her new workplace.

Vocabulary

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE): things that you wear to protect yourself from workplace hazards. Some examples are protective gloves, respirators and safety boots.

What to adapt to? Identify areas

Kim wants to pass her probationary period and do well in her job. To do this, she needs to adapt to the new workplace.

What does Kim need to adapt to?

TASK

Answer the questions.

1. Which are the three areas where Kim needs to adapt?

Circle your answers.

- a. Rules, procedures and policies
- b. Asking the employer to accommodate her needs
- c. Working on her own
- d. Workplace culture

2. What are two examples that show Kim needs to adapt to the rules, procedures and policies?

3. What are two examples that show Kim needs to ask her employer to accommodate her needs?

4. What are two examples that show Kim needs to adapt to the new workplace culture?

REFLECT

Think of a new job or volunteer experience you had.

- How is Kim's story similar to your own?
- Are there any differences? What are they?
- What were three new things you had to adapt to?

Think of your future job.

What are three new things you may need to adapt to?

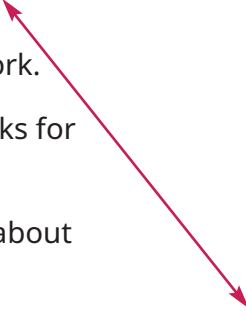
What does adapting look like? Identify actions

What actions could Kim take to adapt?

TASK

Draw a line to match the area for change with an action.

We have done the first one as an example.

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| 1. Kim's PPE is too big for her. |  | a. She could find a strategy to help her focus on tasks. |
| 2. Kim needs to focus on her work. | | b. She could watch how people do things in the shop. |
| 3. Kim needs to have extra breaks for health reasons. | | c. She could read the Employee Manual that she was given. |
| 4. Kim forgets or doesn't know about the shop's rules and policies. | | d. She must ask for PPE that is her size. |
| 5. Kim finds the shop's workplace culture different from her old job. | | e. She could ask her employer to accommodate her health needs. |

REFLECT

Think of the new job or volunteer experience that you had.

What did you do to adapt to the three new things?

Think of one action for each.

Think of your future job.

What would you do to adapt to the three new things?

Think of one action for each.

Why adapt? Identify the purpose



The probationary period is one of the most important times in your job. You need to learn a lot of new things and find your place on the team. You need to work hard to adapt. You can get overwhelmed and lose motivation. When you keep in mind why you need to adapt, you can stay motivated. You can focus on your goal to learn the job, perform well and pass your probationary period.

Each time you adapt, you will get closer to your goal. For example, if you adjust your communication style and politely speak up about your health needs, you will be less stressed at work. When you are less stressed, you can focus on your tasks better.

Kim loves working with vehicles. She wants to keep this job but there are days when she feels it's too much for her to handle. She isn't sure if it's worth adapting.

If Kim keeps in mind how she will benefit if she adapts, she will stay motivated and focus on her goal.

Why should Kim adapt?

TASK

Complete the sentences with your ideas. You can write more than one idea.

We have done the first one as an example.

1. If Kim follows the rules, policies and procedures of her new workplace:

the quality of her work will get better. If the quality of her work gets better, her employer and customers will be happy.

2. If Kim stops listening to music when she needs to focus and finds another way that is allowed:

3. If Kim asks for PPE in her size:

4. If Kim adapts to the new workplace culture:

5. If Kim thinks positively:

REFLECT

Think of your future job.

Why will it be important to adapt to the three new things?

Think of at least one purpose for each.

How can you adapt effectively? Identify and practise strategies

Adaptability is one of the most important skills to use during your probationary period. You need to adapt to the new workplace culture, rules, policies and procedures.

It can be hard when you need to adapt to so many things at the same time, but there are many strategies that can help you. Why not use them and see what happens!



REFLECT

Think of the challenges that Kim is facing.

How can she adapt better?

Do you know of any strategies she could use?



Know who should make changes

When you know who should make the changes, you can adapt to the new workplace better and your probationary period will be easier.

When do you need to adapt?

When you start a new job, you may need to change your routine to do the job. The employer will not accommodate your needs if you can adapt but choose not to. For example, if you are a late riser, the employer will not change your shift hours. You need to change your sleep schedule.

When should the employer accommodate?

There are times when employers should make changes so you can work. This is called the duty to accommodate. For example, the employer should accommodate employees who have a disability or need to take a family member to doctor's appointments regularly.

Vocabulary

Duty to accommodate: responsibility to change rules, policies and procedures so you can participate fully in the workplace

TASK

Who should make changes?

Write "Kim should adapt" or "Employer should accommodate".

1. Kim hurt herself at work. Her doctor said that she can't do her usual tasks for two weeks because she can't lift anything heavy.

2. Kim's son has a soccer game. She wants to go there but it's during her work hours.

3. Kim has three scheduled breaks for her shift. She needs more breaks to smoke.

4. Kim has three scheduled breaks for her shift. She needs breaks at different times to take medication.

5. Kim has more energy when she has coffee in the morning. She stops for coffee on her way to work. This can make her late.

Strategies to ask your employer to accommodate

The employer's duty to accommodate helps the workplace be inclusive. This means they don't leave out people who need help to do the

job or to participate fully in the workplace. It's important to inform your employer about your needs as early as possible.



Kim needs to take a lot of breaks for health reasons. She needs to get PPE that is her size. She isn't used to speaking up about her needs. She needs strategies to ask her employer to accommodate her needs.

Here are some that can help:

Find out how to ask

Find out how to ask your employer to accommodate.

Sometimes you may just need to talk to your supervisor or manager. Other times, you may need to write a letter of accommodation and submit it on paper or by email.

You can learn about this from your Employee Manual, supervisor, manager or from someone in human resources.

If your employer wants you to write a letter of accommodation, they may be able to give you an example to follow or one that you can fill out.

Know what to say

1. Let your employer know that you are asking them to accommodate your needs.
 - I need to ask for accommodation for health reasons.
 - Can I ask for accommodation for my disability?
 - I would like to ask for accommodation because I need to take my child to medical appointments twice a month.
2. Tell the employer how you need them to accommodate.
 - I just need to take my breaks at different times. I need to take my medication at specific times.
 - Is it possible to get the work orders in larger print please?
 - The appointments are in the morning. I wonder if I can start and finish later those days.

Vocabulary

Letter of accommodation: a letter you write to your employer to ask them to accommodate your needs

-
3. Let the employer know that you are open to other solutions as well.
 - This is what I did in my other job, but I am open to any other solution that works for the company.
 4. Let the employer know that you can show proof of your disability or appointments.
 - I can give you documents to show that I need accommodation.
 5. Thank the employer for considering your request. .
 - Thank you for considering my request.
 - I appreciate that you consider my request.

TASK 1

Kim's PPE is too big for her. She is asking her supervisor, Jonny, for PPE that is her size.

Complete the conversation. Fill in the blanks with the sentences below.

Is there anything I can do while I wait for you?

My PPE is too big for me.

Sounds good. Thank you.

The respirator is too big for my face. Can I get a smaller one?

Hi Jonny. Do you have a moment?

Kim: _____

Jonny: Sure, what can I do for you?

Kim: _____

Jonny: Oh, really? Which pieces?

Kim: _____

Jonny: Sure! I will check if we have smaller sizes right away. You can try them on and see which one fits. Before that, do not do dry sanding and grinding!

Kim: _____

Jonny: Just clean up your workstation. I should be back soon.

Kim: _____

Jonny: No problem!

TASK 2

Kim needs to take her medication with a snack at specific times. She can't change the times and they don't fit with her scheduled breaks. She needs to ask her employer to accommodate this.

Jonny told her that it is the company's policy to do it in writing.

Write a letter of accommodation for Kim.

Use the checklist and sample letter below to make sure you include all the details.

- Include the employer's full address on the top left side
- Greet the person who will read your letter
- Say what job Kim does
- Explain why Kim needs the employer to accommodate
- Say how the employer can accommodate
- Say that Kim is open to suggestions from the employer
- Thank the employer for considering the request
- Sign Kim's name

Joe's Autobody Shop
12 Wheel Street
London, Ontario
1A1 1B1

Dear Holly,

I work as a helper in the plant. I am writing to ask if you would accommodate my disability. The small print on the work orders is hard for me to read.

Could you please provide work orders in larger print? This was done in my previous job and I was able to perform all my duties. It should work for my job here as well. I'm also open to other suggestions you have.

I can give you documents to show proof that I need this.

Thank you for considering my request.

Best regards,
Renee Spence

REFLECT

Think of a past job or volunteer experience.

- Did you have to ask your employer to accommodate?
- What did you need them to accommodate?
- How did you have to ask for it? Did you talk to someone or write a letter?
- Was the employer able to accommodate?

Think of your future job.

- Would you have to ask your employer to accommodate?
- What would you need them to accommodate?
- How do you feel about asking?

Strategies to follow policies and procedures

It's important to adapt to the new workplace rules, policies and procedures. They can be different in every workplace. You should learn about the ones in your workplace and adapt to them.



Sometimes Kim makes mistakes because she doesn't know or remember the shop's rules, policies and procedures. She needs strategies to learn and adapt to them.

Here are some that can help:

Read onboarding documents

Read onboarding documents carefully. Keep them handy so you can check them when you need to.

Onboarding documents may include:

- Attendance Policy
- Health and Safety Procedures
- Employee Manual

In different workplaces, these documents may have different names. When you aren't sure where to find the information you need, ask your supervisor or someone from human resources.

Practise good habits

- Come to work on time.
- Follow the company's dress code and safety procedures.
- Don't spend too much time chatting with your co-workers.
- Don't use your phone when you work. Don't text, make calls, or answer calls unless it is urgent.
- Follow the company's quality standards. Use a checklist of things you need to pay attention to when you do a task.
- Always double-check your work.
- Complete your tasks on time.

Vocabulary

Onboarding: when the employer welcomes you and introduces you to the team. This is when you learn how the company works.

Human resources: a company department that is responsible for hiring new employees and making sure their documents are in place

Dress code: a rule about what type of clothes you should wear at work

See **Collaboration:**
Unit 1 to learn:

- How to make a checklist
- How to complete tasks on time



TASK

Kim is reading the Workplace Policies document. It was one of her onboarding documents. She wants to learn more about what the employer expects so she can adapt.

What does Kim need to adapt to?

Read the parts of the document. Answer the questions.

Workplace policies

Joe's Autobody Shop

Time Off

We understand that you may need to take days off for doctor's appointments, tests, exams, or family matters. We are happy to accommodate but we ask that you book your days off as soon as you can. You must fill out the Time Off Request Form. It is available on the notice board. You must have your supervisor's approval to take your time or days off.

1. In her previous job, when Kim needed to take a day off, she just had to talk to her supervisor. She would get the approval right away.

How is the shop's time off policy different? What does Kim need to do when she needs time off?

Workplace policies

Joe's Autobody Shop

Dress Code and PPE

We don't have a strict dress code, but we want you to work safely. Do not wear baggy clothes and a lot of jewelry. No big rings and long chains. When in doubt, ask your supervisor.

Always have your PPE on. Your earmuffs are for hearing protection. Don't wear them to listen to music. You may be subject to disciplinary action if you work without your PPE.

2. In her previous job, Kim could wear anything. She wore wide-leg pants because they were comfortable. She only wore gloves as PPE.

How is the shop's dress code and PPE policy different? What does Kim need to do?

Workplace policies

Joe's Autobody Shop

Customer Service

Our customers come first. They should always be served as soon as they enter the shop. Always greet them and ask how you can help. Stop your task to serve the customer who has just entered the shop. Always smile.

- 3. In her previous job, Kim did most of her work at the back. She didn't have to talk to customers.

How is Kim's job at the shop different? What does Kim need to do?

Workplace policies

Joe's Autobody Shop

Working Hours

We expect you to work all the hours that we scheduled you for. You are here to work. Don't spend too much time chatting with your co-workers or in the bathroom. Don't answer phone calls or text messages when you are working.

- 4. Kim's brother calls her during the day. In her previous job, Kim could answer her brother's call because their breaks were at the same time. Now their breaks are at different times.

How will Kim need to adapt?

Strategies to adapt to a new workplace culture

It is important to adapt to the new workplace culture. Workplace culture is the personality of the workplace. It's how people in the workplace think, communicate and approach their work.

When you understand the workplace culture, you become part of the team and grow with the organization. It can help you be more productive and happier at work.



Kim has noticed that things work differently in the shop. The workplace culture was different in her previous job. She needs strategies to help her adapt.

Here are some that can help:

Watch how people work

Do people work on their own or with others?

For example:

If you are used to working alone but people in your new workplace work together, you will need to change how you work. You may need to communicate and collaborate more. When you work on a team, make sure you understand the workflow. You may not be sure what your responsibilities are. Ask your supervisor or manager.

Vocabulary

Workflow: the order of steps to complete a task

Find out who makes decisions

Who needs to be included when decisions are made?

For example:

If you know how to solve problems on your own but your supervisor needs to approve all decisions, you will need to adapt. You can still come up with a solution but before you act on it, talk to your supervisor.

Learn workplace words

Do people use words you don't know when they talk about work?

For example:

If people use a lot of new words or short forms of words, you will need to learn them. You can ask your co-workers for help. Say: "I don't know this word, can you please explain it?" or "Is there a list of these words, so that I can learn them?"

Use the same way to communicate

How do employees communicate? Do they use email, telephone or do they talk in person?

For example:

If you are used to talking to your friends and co-workers in person, but your new supervisor always sends you emails, you will need to adjust and start using emails to communicate with your supervisor.

Use the same style to communicate

Do most people use a formal or informal style of communication?

For example:

If you are used to talking in a casual way, but people at your workplace speak more formally, you will need to adjust how you talk to them.

In an informal workplace you could say: "Hey, please hand me those notes."

In a more formal workplace you could say: "Would you mind passing me those notes."

TASK

Kim is new to the workplace culture.

Which strategy could she use to adapt?

Write one strategy for each scenario.

1. During her first week at her new job, Kim used a formal style when she talked to her co-workers. However, she sees that her co-workers talk to each other like they are long-time friends.

2. In the past, Kim worked on her own a lot. She made most decisions herself. In the shop, she works with others. She also has a supervisor. He is mostly in his office. Kim isn't sure what to do if there is a decision to make.

3. Kim was confused when she heard one of her co-workers say "that's an R&R part". She doesn't understand what R&R means.

4. Whenever Kim has a question, she sends an email to her supervisor. Her supervisor is very nice and always answers her email, but sometimes it takes him a day or two to respond. Kim would like to get the answers sooner, but she isn't sure how she should talk to him.

5. Kim is used to working on her own. In her new job, she works with others. She is sometimes not sure what tasks she should do and what tasks are someone else's responsibilities.

REFLECT

- Have you used any of these strategies in the past?
- Which ones? Did they work for you?
- Which strategies could you use in the future?



Practise positive self-talk

Say good things about yourself to yourself. Don't say anything to yourself that you wouldn't say to others.

For example, if your friend didn't pass a test, you would likely encourage them to try again. So if you don't pass a test, don't tell yourself things like, "I'll never pass this test." Be positive and say, "I'll give it another try."

Other examples of positive self-talk are:

- I can do it.
- I made a mistake but it's okay. I'll learn from it.
- I can be successful.
- I will try again.
- I will keep trying until I do it.

When you practise positive self-talk, you can handle stress better.

TASK

Kim is overwhelmed with how much she needs to adapt. She is not sure if she can do it.

She needs to practise positive self-talk.

Change the negative thoughts into positive thoughts.

We have done the first one as an example.

Negative	Positive
I can never do it. It's too hard.	<i>It's hard but I will keep trying until I do it.</i>
There is no way this will work.	
I never do anything right.	
Nobody likes me.	
Nobody wants to be around me.	
I don't have the willpower to do it.	

REFLECT

- Do you practise positive self-talk?
- What do you say to yourself when you succeed?
- What do you say to yourself when you don't succeed at the first try?
- How do you feel when you say something positive to yourself?

Apply what you've learned

Now that you know more about how to adapt, how would you handle the following situations?

Circle two answers.

1. You started a new job. Most of the things are new to you. You have made some mistakes.
 - a. I would say to myself, "I will keep trying until I get it."
 - b. I would say to myself, "I never get anything right."
 - c. I would say to myself, "It's hard but I will get it right."

2. You have a doctor's appointment in three weeks. It's during your shift hours.
 - a. I would let my supervisor know as soon as possible.
 - b. I would let my supervisor know the day before.
 - c. I would book the day off as early as possible.

3. Before you started to work, you would talk to family members over the phone during the day. They still call, but it's your work time.
 - a. I would go to the bathroom and talk to them from there. Nobody will notice.
 - b. I wouldn't take their call when I am working. I would call them back after work.
 - c. I would explain to my family members that I can't speak during work hours.

4. You are still adapting to your job. There are times when you feel very overwhelmed.
 - a. I would tell myself, "It's hard but I will keep trying until I adapt."
 - b. I would tell myself, "This is too much for me to handle. I'll quit and find another job."
 - c. I would tell myself, "I got this!"

5. You are adapting to the new workplace culture. You notice that your co-workers use a lot of new words. You don't know most of them.
 - a. I would ask for a list of new words my co-workers use.
 - b. I would ask what the new words mean and write them in my notebook.
 - c. I would pretend that I know what the new words mean.

What's next?

Employee performance review

If Janet and Kim use the strategies in this unit, stay in the job and pass the probationary period, they will have a performance review with their supervisor.

Employers do performance reviews regularly. The first performance review in your new job will be at the end of your probationary period. This is the time when your supervisor or manager will officially speak to you about how you have performed in your job, what you have done well and what you need to improve.

What to expect at your performance review

Supervisors or managers may do performance reviews differently but most of the time they ask you to speak about what you do well, what you like about the job, what you find hard and what you want to learn.

After you have shared, they will discuss how they have rated your work performance. To do this, they use an employee performance evaluation.

Employee performance evaluation

An employee performance evaluation is a document your supervisor uses to rate how well you have done your job. For example, getting to work on time, asking questions and following instructions.

Here are some key words from an employee performance evaluation and how the rating works:

Key words	Rating
Job title: the name of your job	Poor: You never did it
Review period: the time period that the evaluation is for	Fair: You sometimes did it
Employee ID: the number that you get as an employee when you get hired. It can be used in your workplace documents, such as your contract or your pay stub.	Good: You usually did it
Date: the day when your performance review happens	Excellent: You always did it

Vocabulary

Performance review: a meeting where your employer discusses with you how you have performed in your job, your strengths and areas to improve

How to read an employee performance evaluation

1. Find the activity. For example, "Came to work on time."
2. Move your eyes or finger across and stop when you see a checkmark (☑).
3. Then read straight up to see the rating.
For example, for "Came to work on time" you did "Excellent".

Employee performance evaluation				
Employee name: Job title: Review period: March 15 – June 15, 2023	Employee ID: 19 09 89 Date: June 15, 2023 Manager: Kenny McLeod			
	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent
Attendance				
Came to work on time	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Informed supervisor when couldn't come to work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Appearance and hygiene				
Wore safe clothes	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Was neat and tidy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Communication				
Followed instructions fully	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Asked questions if needed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Was open to feedback	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Policy				
Followed company policy	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Quality of work				
Met the company quality standards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Comments: Employee passed the probationary period				

TASK

Answer the questions.

Imagine that this is your performance evaluation form.

1. Which three did you get “Excellent” for?

2. How did you do for “Followed instructions fully”? _____

Which strategy could you use to improve? _____

3. How did you do for “Was open to feedback”? _____

What strategy could you use to improve? _____

4. How did you do for “Followed company policy”? _____

What strategy could you use to improve? _____

5. How did you do for “Met the company quality standards”? _____

What strategy could you use to improve? _____

Passing your probationary period will be a big success. Most likely by then you will have learned how to do your job. You will have adapted to the new workplace.

Then it will be time to thrive in the job. Most employers like it when their employees stay and grow with their company.

Keep improving your adaptability skills so you can get more training and education, a promotion or a pay raise. You are on to exciting things!

Self-evaluation

Self-evaluation 1

How well can you do these activities?

Activity	Not at all well	Not very well	Pretty well	Very well	Extremely well
1. I can take care of my body when I do hard physical work such as heavy lifting or standing for a long time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I can learn from my mistakes.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I can adjust the way I communicate to understand instructions better.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I can remember a lot of new information.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Self-evaluation 2

How well can you do these activities?

Activity	Not at all well	Not very well	Pretty well	Very well	Extremely well
1. I can change my habits and routine to focus on my job.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I can adapt to the new workplace culture.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I can ask my employer to accommodate my needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I can stay positive when things don't go the way I planned or expected.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Answer key

Janet's story

PAGE 6

Task

1. a, c, d
2. Possible answer:
She doesn't ask questions when she doesn't know what to do. She makes mistakes because of this.
3. Possible answer:
She can't remember everything. She has made a few mistakes because of this.
4. When she gets home, she is very tired and sore.

PAGE 8

Task

1. c
2. e
3. a
4. d
5. b

PAGE 16

Task

Possible answers:

1. She could write them down in her notebook.
2. She could admit her mistake and apologize.
3. She could watch a video about it. She could ask her supervisor or co-workers.
4. She could check her notes. Then, she could ask her supervisor if she can't find it in her notes.

PAGE 26

Apply what you've learned

1. a, c
2. b, c
3. a, c
4. b, c
5. a, c

Kim's story

PAGE 28

Task

1. a, b, d
2. Possible answers:
She isn't used to the strict safety procedures.
She isn't used to talking to customers.
3. Possible answers:
She needs to take extra breaks.
The shop's PPE is too big for her.
4. Possible answers:
The workers talk to each other like friends.
The workers share things and joke a lot. Kim isn't used to this.

PAGE 30

Task

1. d
2. a
3. e
4. c
5. b

PAGE 35

Task

1. Employer should accommodate
2. Kim should adapt
3. Kim should adapt
4. Employer should accommodate
5. Kim should adapt

PAGE 38

Task 1

Kim: Hi Jonny. Do you have a moment?

Jonny: Sure, what can I do for you?

Kim: My PPE is too big for me.

Jonny: Oh, really? Which pieces?

Kim: The respirator is too big for my face. Can I get a smaller one?

Jonny: Sure! I will check if we have smaller sizes right away. You can try them on and see which one fits. Before that, do not do dry sanding and grinding!

Kim: Is there anything I can do while I wait for you?

Jonny: Just clean up your workstation. I should be back soon.

Kim: Sounds good. Thank you.

Jonny: No problem!

PAGE 43 and 44

Task

Possible answers:

1. In her previous job, Kim only had to talk to her supervisor when she needed a day off. She got approval right away. Now she needs to book days off as early as possible and wait for the approval.
2. In her previous job, there was no dress code. Kim could wear wide-leg pants. She only wore gloves as PPE. Now she can't wear baggy clothes. She needs to wear more PPE than before.
3. In her previous job, Kim didn't talk to customers. Now she needs to learn how to do it because the shop wants customers to be happy.
4. In the past, Kim could answer her brother's calls because they had breaks at the same time. Now she needs to tell her brother that her breaks are at different times. They will have to talk after work.

PAGE 47

Task

1. Strategy: Use the same way to communicate
Kim could adapt her communication style. She could talk to her co-workers in a casual way.
2. Strategy: Find out who makes decisions
Kim could talk to the team and supervisor about how to make decisions.
3. Strategy: Learn new workplace words
Kim could ask her co-worker what an “R&R part” means. She could write the explanation in her notebook.
4. Strategy: Use the same way to communicate
Kim could ask how her co-workers communicate with the supervisor when they have questions.
5. Strategy: Watch how people work
Kim could ask her supervisor about her responsibilities.

PAGE 49

Task

Negative	Positive
I can never do it. It's too hard.	<i>It's hard but I will keep trying until I do it.</i>
There is no way this will work.	I will try harder, and it will work.
I never do anything right.	I make mistakes but it's okay. I can learn from mistakes.
Nobody likes me.	My family loves me. My friends appreciate me.
Nobody wants to be around me.	There are people who see the good in me. I am worthy.
I don't have the willpower to do it.	It's hard but I won't give up.

PAGE 51

Apply what you've learned

1. a, c
2. a, c
3. b, c
4. a, c
5. a, b

What's next

PAGE 54

Task

1. Came to work on time
Informed supervisor when couldn't come to work
Wore safe clothes
2. Fair
Possible answer:
I would take notes.
3. Good
Possible answer:
I would thank them for the feedback and promise to improve my work.
4. Good
Possible answer:
I would read my onboarding documents such as the Employee Manual.
5. Fair
Possible answer:
I would make a checklist of things I need to improve.