# Discussion Topics

# Chapter 6: Learning—What It’s All About

The following Discussion Topics correlate with *Job Savvy*, sixth edition. Discussion Topics provide directions to help you in instructing your students during class time.

Activities Supplements are provided in the ebook to offer students guidance to complete activities found in the margins of their workbook. You may want to present these as in-class activities or as homework assignments. Review Activities are provided in separate handouts to instructors only. The questions found therein may be used in the classroom or as review activities (graded or not).

# Discussion Topics

## Learning Is the Key to Success (page 84)

### Discuss the chapter introduction and “Learning Is the Key to Success” (pages 83–84). What is the concept of lifelong learning? It’s important for your students to realize that learning is a continual activity. Learning is a lifelong process. Employers expect their employees to continue learning on the job. List various ways learning takes place. Discuss informal learning as well as formal learning.

### Ask your students to define *learning organization*. What does it mean in the new labor market? What is self-directed learning? Why is taking charge of your own learning necessary?

Have your students complete the “A Personal Learning Project” exercise on page 84. After completing this exercise, ask the students to discuss their answers with another student, or you may choose to share their findings as a class activity.

Note: Some people in your group may believe they are not capable of learning, especially if they have experienced failure in the classroom. These people have a special need for praise for their informal learning. They need to know that this learning is as valuable as classroom learning.

The following are additional activities you may use to enrich your students learning.

### Additional Activity: Thinking about Learning

Discuss the learning that takes place in the first five years of a typical child’s life. Make a list of the basics a child learns. Discuss how this learning takes place. Point out that much of this learning takes place in an unstructured environment, and that much of it is done by observing and doing. What skills were learned? How were these skills learned? Who or what served as the “instructor?”

### Additional Activity: Continued Learning

Divide the class into groups of three or four. Ask each group to make a list detailing what people of different age groups generally know about cars and how they learn what they know about them. What does a child need to know about cars? What learning is necessary for a teenager? What is important for an adult to know? Share ideas together when the groups have completed the task.

### Additional Activity: Structured vs. Unstructured Learning

Ask the class to list formal learning institutions in your area. Write their answers on the board. Now ask them to list informal learning experiences available in your area. Discuss the ways that informal learning might take place in these settings.

## How Adults Learn (page 85)

Discuss the four characteristics of adult learners. Review the four tips to help in learning: practice, know your learning pattern, learn by association, and use the whole-part-whole method. Point out that most people do not use all of these tips at one time but choose and apply one tip to try.

## Learning to Do Your Job (page 86)

Discuss the following questions that an employee might ask in order to perform their job successfully:

* What tasks are assigned to my role?
* How do I perform each task?
* How will each task be evaluated?

Have the group read the “Learning to Do Your Job” section (pages 86–89) and complete “Learning on the Job” (page 87). Discuss their lists and the reasons for putting items on the list. Discuss the different methods of learning about a job listed on pages 87–89:

* **Job description:** What is a job description? Students should understand that additional information beyond the job description may be needed to have a complete idea of a job’s responsibilities.
* **Supervisors:** Emphasize that it’s important to ask supervisors questions when information isn’t clear. Point out that knowing the evaluation process is important for job security.
* **Coworkers:** Point out that observing coworkers should be done wisely. Sometimes a supervisor will team a new worker with a coworker as part of the training process. If, on the other hand, a new worker chooses the coworker, it should be a reliable worker. Listening to the coworker talk about the job, the supervisor, and other workers is helpful to a new worker; however, the new worker should take caution if the information is overly critical.
* **Friends who have similar jobs:** Discuss why it is wise to talk to the supervisor before doing the work the way a friend has suggested.
* **Training:** Discuss the three types of training that prepare new employees for their jobs. Define on-the-job training and classroom instruction. What is *media training*? Ask group members to share experiences they have had with these types of training.
* **Schools:** Define *continuing education***.** List any schools that offer adult and continuing-education classes in your area. Share any experiences students have had with employers that paid for classes. What were the requirements when applying for this benefit? Was a certain grade or grade-point required to receive the payment? How was the payment received? Did the training result in a pay raise or a promotion?
* **Conferences:** Discuss any conferences that might be helpful to your students.
* **Workshops:** Discuss the ways that workshops vary in quality. Suggest ways to check out workshops and questions to ask about them.
* **Reading:** Discuss the materials that are available on various occupations. Share any books or magazines you have on this subject, including these online resources: the Occupational Outlook Handbook (<https://www.bls.gov/ooh>) and O\*NET Online (<https://www.onetonline.org>).
* **The Internet:** What is *online learning*? Discuss distance learning or distance training. Discuss the various search engines, YouTube, and Goodwill Community Foundation’s Learn Free website (<https://GCFLearnFree.org>). Encourage your students to explore these resources. Ask your students to complete the exercise “Learning to Improve Job Performance” (page 90). Have the group share any resources they use.

## The Learning Organization (page 90)

Read the “The Learning Organization” (page 90). What is a learning organization? How does it differ from a traditional workplace? Discuss how a worker contributes to a learning organization.

## How Job Savvy Are You? (page 90)

### After students have completed the case studies on page *9*0, discuss each case study and the answers students wrote.

## Education for Life (page 91)

Not everyone learns at the same pace or in the same way. To have the maximum potential to learn, each person needs to know their learning style. Although students may not always be able to use their preferred styles, knowing how they learn best will enable them to learn more easily. It also will give them more confidence in their ability to learn. Seeing our learning styles as part of our unique personalities helps us avoid comparing ourselves with others. It helps us accept ourselves.

Ask the group to read through the section “Education for Life” on pages 91–94 and complete the checklist “My Preferred Learning Style” (page 92). Each student should rank their three most frequently used methods. Then, as a group, go through the checklist and rank the most frequently used learning methods.

Note:This group ranking may give you some ideas on improving the instruction in this course. For example, if several of your trainees list *observing* in their top three learning styles, you might decide to use more videos or demonstrations.

To prepare students to do the exercise “Personal Learning Project” (page 91), review “Steps to Learning.” This exercise is designed to help students plan individual learning projects. Give students sufficient time to fill out the questionnaire on pages 94–96 and to share learning projects. Encourage them to follow through on their plans.

#### You may use the following case study as an additional activity to help your students understand the steps to learning. Have the group plan the learning steps Drew needs to take. Write their answers on a whiteboard. Encourage the group to use their imaginations to fill in the resources and reasons for Drew’s answers. They will need to “be Drew” for this exercise.

### Case Study: Drew’s Learning Project

Drew has worked at the Valley Brook Bank for two years. Recently, the bank manager told Drew that the bank will be switching to a new computer system for managing transactions. The new system will be up and running in three months. The employees are expected to be proficient on the system within six months.

Drew has had one computer course at the community college, in addition to a highschool course and some on-the-job training on the bank’s old system. His friend Kara is a software salesperson. Drew is excited about this new system and is anxious to get started.

1. What skill does Drew want to learn?
2. What is Drew’s motivation?
3. What is his objectives? When he is done, what does Drew want to accomplish?
4. Who can help Drew plan his learning project?
5. What are Drew resources?
6. What is Drew’s best resource?
7. When will Drew schedule this project?
8. How much time should Drew spend daily or weekly on the project?
9. What can Drew do to ensure that he completes the project?
10. How will Drew practice what he learns?
11. How will Drew (or someone else) evaluate progress on his learning project?

## How Job Savvy Are You? (page 96)

Divide the class into small groups. Each group should review the case studies and create a personal learning project for the individuals in the case study. Students should refer to the questions in the “Personal Learning Project” discussion on page 94 as a guide. When the groups have completed this exercise, review the case studies together and record the responses on the whiteboard. The format might include:

Skill desired:

Person’s motivation:

Possible resources:

Best resources:

Time schedule:

Progress evaluation:

Practice skill:

## A Useful Skill: Active Learning (page 97)

What does it mean to be an active learner? Share personal experiences of when new learning has been used in your life. Ask students to share similar experiences. Use the questions in *Job Savvy* as a guide for this class time. Consider the following questions:

1. How has new information or a new skill been useful in my workplace or my life?
2. How has it been useful to improve my life, solve a current or future problem, or make decisions?

## Summary Discussion Topic

Discuss this question with the class: Why is continued learning important to you?

# Additional Resources

### Videos

Use the provided Video presentations to share helpful, chapter-specific visuals and information with your students.

### Additional Resource

In the Additional Resources document you will find links to important sources of information related to each chapter of *Job Savvy*. You can find more information about job search and success at <https://JIST.com>.