



Junior  
Achievement®  
of South Dakota

JA Inspire

Teacher Guidebook



## THANK YOU

Thank you for participating in *JA Inspire* and helping Junior Achievement empower young people to own their economic success. Junior Achievement recognizes the growing need to spark an interest in careers and the path to career success even before students enter high school.

## PURPOSE

Students who have an idea of what they want to do after high school, based on their self-awareness and exposure to business opportunities, are much more likely to take relevant courses, stay in school, and graduate.

At the conclusion of *JA Inspire*, students should be excited about their future. They will have a better understanding of the courses they need to take in high school, a plan for post-secondary education, and a clear pathway to a career.

## OBJECTIVES

### STUDENTS WILL:

- Understand career opportunities available in South Dakota.
- Gain insight into career clusters that interest them.
- See the connection between high school programming choices and careers.
- Collect information about the education required to be successful in obtaining a job.
- Learn about soft skills and other career readiness topics.

## DESCRIPTION

*JA Inspire* is a career-based event filled with learning experiences that are designed by individual industry teams to align with what the industry will need from its future employees. Unlike traditional career fairs, the students do the interviewing rather than the employer. They ask questions of volunteers from local businesses and learn about skills that will be in demand when they graduate. They participate in hands-on activities, often using actual equipment or tools used on a job. The event is designed to transform students' abstract ideas about work into tangible ambitions and plans, and to build their soft skills.

JA of South Dakota would like to thank JA USA® and JA of Kentuckiana along with local staff, educators, counselors, career advisors, the SD Department of Labor & Regulation, and SDMyLife powered by Xello for their contributions to the development of this curriculum.

The three professional videos that compliment this program were developed by JA of Kentuckiana.

# JA INSPIRE OVERVIEW (3-5 min)

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## DISCUSSION

### *JA Inspire Overview:*

- *JA Inspire* is a three-part program:
  - First, teachers will lead students through a variety of videos and activities to help students identify potential career choices and provide valuable career-readiness skills for their future.
  - Second, students will participate in a virtual event where they will explore local businesses and learn about future career opportunities.
  - Third, students have access to the virtual platform to utilize both before the event as well as after.
    - Before the Event: Students can explore Career Stations of their top career matches to prep for the live event.
    - After the Event: Students can continue to explore careers until late April.
- The purpose of the program is to spark student interest and introduce them to various work environments and the skills necessary for their successful participation in the world of work.
- The in-person event will be held on Tuesday, February 15, 2022 at the Sioux Falls Convention Center. Arrival times are based on each individual school. Students will be able to:
  - See what people do on the job utilizing actual tools, equipment, and technology.
  - Meet volunteers from businesses who will answer questions about jobs and explain what they studied to prepare for work, how they got their first job, and why they like the career they have chosen.
  - Consider the education needed to enter their future career.
- The Virtual Event will allow students to:
  - Watch videos and explore documents of people doing their job - utilizing actual tools, equipment, and technology.
  - Learn about work environments, salary, and a company's values.
  - Consider the education needed to enter their future career.
- The specific career in which a student is interested may not be featured at *JA Inspire*, but students will have the opportunity to explore a variety of industries within the main 16 Career Clusters. They will also get to explore a variety of post-secondary education options as well.
- Student workbooks will be collected after the pre-work activities and redistributed prior to the event.
- Students will receive a lanyard with an event card to wear at the event.
  - Before the event, students will write their name and school on the front and they will write down the career stations they plan to visit on the back.
  - At the event, students will get stamps from the people/stations they interact with on the back of the card. JA will collect these at the end of the event and student will have the **chance to win one of three \$20 gift cards!**

# DEVELOPING A CAREER PLAN (10 min)

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## SHOW THE VIDEO - JA INSPIRE: DEVELOPING A CAREER PLAN (5:16)

To access the video go to: [www.jasd.org/inspire](http://www.jasd.org/inspire) and scroll down to see video links or type the URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dtTiFQID2ts>

Have students turn to **page 3** to take notes while they watch the video.

## DISCUSSION

- Ask students to share some thoughts that stuck out to them in the video.
- Do students agree with the things the video listed about successful people? Why or Why not? Would they add anything to the list?

### Video Highlights: Developing a Career Plan

- Career Planning takes our interests, abilities, and skills and matches them to potential opportunities to earn a living. It's finding a career to pay us for what we are gifted at and enjoy doing!
- Consider your interests – what do you enjoy doing? Passion is key!
  - How do you like to spend your time?
  - Like to be inside? Outside?
  - Like to work with people? Alone?
  - Like to work with your hands? Prefer to read and learn?
- Ask yourself questions:
  - Do you like to compete?
  - What subjects in school do you most enjoy? What careers align with those?
  - What hits your heart? Money follows excellence. Money follows you being the best you can be at the things you love.
- Successful people:
  - Are energized by what they do!
  - Are dedicated to their craft.
  - Are awesome at what they do!
  - Always have a plan and aren't afraid to adapt the plan!
  - Are constant learners.
  - Take feedback well.
  - Know where to find the right answers.
  - Are willing to fail.
- Resources are available!
  - Check with your guidance counselors for more information!
  - Websites [See **page 17** in the student workbook for local website resources.]
  - People (mentors, teachers, counselors) can help you think through career planning.
- Take advantage of *JA Inspire* to begin thinking about your future!

# CAREER MATCH EXPLORATION (25-30 min)

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## DISCUSSION (3-5 MIN)

- Career Clusters
  - Have students stay on **page 3** to learn about Career Clusters.  
Define *career cluster*: A career cluster is a grouping of jobs and industries related to skills and products.
  - Explain that career clusters group industries by the products and the skills that workers need. A career cluster describes jobs and the education that a student needs to enter a career and be successful.
- Career Matchmaker
  - An important reason for completing a career assessment (as students did through SMyLife powered by Xello) is to identify personal strengths—their interests, skills, and work priorities. Work priorities are the physical and social conditions that affect the quality of a job experience.
  - By knowing their strengths, students can better explore careers that may be of interest, confidently set personal goals, and increase their likelihood of success.
  - This self-awareness allows students to identify why they are drawn to certain activities and why others seem challenging. It prepares them to make better decisions about their education and career.

## ACTIVITY: EXPLORING TOP CAREER MATCHES (15-25 MIN)

1. Have students turn to **page 4** in their student workbook.
2. Have students log-in to their SMyLife powered by Xello Account. Assuming they have already completed the assessment, from the homepage, have students click on “Matchmaker” under the “About Me” section.
3. Give students time to click into their top three matches and fill out the information found on **pages 4 & 5**.
  - a. The questions in the student workbook are laid out similar to the Xello screen.
    - i. **“Salary, Education, and Demand”** are found directly under the **“Career”** title. Additional information for these categories can be found by scrolling down.
    - ii. **“Why is this a good match?”** Click on “Find out why” on the right hand side of the screen.
    - iii. Below that is a list of **“Similar Careers.”**
    - iv. Below that is the **“Career Cluster”** (some careers fall into more than one cluster).
    - v. For “Other notes of Interest” – students can highlight things they note as they scroll down and look at the description, core tasks, workplace, working conditions, earnings, career path, education & training, etc.
  - b. Please note, students can add education filters if they know what education path they want to pursue. Otherwise, just know the top three results show careers of all education options.
  - c. If students aren’t interested in one of their top matches – they could skim the “Similar Careers” to see if there is another career they might be more interested in or apply more filters on the “Explore Careers” screen (or the “Explore Options” tab).
4. For further preparation, help students login to the JA Inspire Virtual platform to familiarize themselves with the companies and careers that will be showcased at the in-person event. Emphasize to students that they have access to these resources until late April.

Website: <https://jainspiresd.vfairs.com/> Login Email: Schools will have the login information for students.

Virtual Event Features:

- a. **Outside the Lobby:** Click on the doors to enter the Virtual Event!
  - b. **Virtual Lobby:** The lobby is your entrance point and provides access to other parts of the site:
    - i. **Exhibit Hall** – Enter the exhibit hall to visit the career stations.
    - ii. **Career Cluster Icons** – Takes you directly to the career stations within that cluster.
    - iii. **Company Banners** – Takes you directly to the career station for this company. (*Event Sponsors*)
    - iv. **Auditorium** – Listen to welcome messages from our sponsors!
    - v. **Search Box** – Enter the name of the career or business you would like to visit.
    - vi. **Backpack** – This is where you access saved documents that you find helpful so you can review or share them later. While exploring career stations, click + *Backpack* beside the document or video you want to save. After the event, you can email the items in your backpack to your email address.
  - c. **Career Stations:** Information within each career station has been provided by the company/organization. The information will vary, but most career stations include:
    - i. **Description** – Brief description of the company.
    - ii. **Videos** – Videos that showcase the career and business. These can be saved to your backpack.
    - iii. **Documents** – Information that can be saved to your backpack. Most career stations will have a “Day in the Life” document that describes the *day in the life* of people who work in that career.
    - iv. **Banners** – sometimes if you click on a banner it will take you to a website or additional information.
    - v. **Links** – a variety of resources to explore!
5. Point out the Top 10 Hot Careers in SD and the United States on **page 6** of the student workbook. Ask how many students had top careers matches that are on the list?
6. As time allows, have students share some interesting things they learned about their matches.

# INTERACTING TO LEARN (10 min)

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## SHOW THE VIDEO - JA INSPIRE: INTERACTING TO LEARN (4:57)

To access the video go to: [www.jasd.org/inspire](http://www.jasd.org/inspire) and scroll down to see video links or type the URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=etqxcW60EPE&t=8s>

Have students turn to **page 7** to take notes while they watch the video.

## DISCUSSION

- Ask students to share some thoughts that stuck out to them in the video.
- Discuss the impact of Social Media:
  - Social media posts cannot be fully deleted and can damage your reputation.
  - Some employers are using social media to evaluate candidates before giving them an interview.
  - What is the appropriate use of social media?
- Using examples of well-known people, discuss having a personal brand.

### Video Highlights: Interacting to Learn

- Interacting with people already in the career you are considering is one of the best ways to discover what it is really all about.
- You only get one chance to make a great first impression.
  - Dress appropriately.
  - Look people in the eye.
  - Sit up in your chair, be alert, take notes, and have prepared questions.
  - Exude confidence, have a plan, don't waste their time, and have a good handshake.
- Social Media:
  - You are making a first impression before you even walk through the door.
  - Employers go to social media to see the "real" person.
- You start building your brand even now! Shape your brand around who you want to be – keep working at it, and you'll eventually achieve the brand you want!
- What employers are looking for in candidates:
  - Genuinely care about the industry's mission.
  - Do we like them? Do they fit? Are they a hard worker?
  - Timely, Conscientious, Innovative, Strategic, Creative, Humble, Teachable, etc.

# SOFT SKILLS (5-10 min)

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## ACTIVITY

1. As noted in the Interacting to Learn video, students need to develop skills to be able to get and keep a job. In this activity, students will consider skills employers want and consider which ones they need to work on developing.
2. Tell students that you will read aloud a soft skill that is needed in the workplace. Students will consider whether they feel they are generally strong at that skill or if they need improvement before they start working. Students will stand or sit depending on what matches their assessment (or use thumbs up/thumbs down if completing on a digital platform).
  - Designate standing/thumbs up as “Strong” and sitting/thumbs down as “Needs Improvement.”
  - First, read the skill of Responsibility (below) and have students consider whether they are generally strong at that skill or if they need improvement before they start working.
  - Then, have students stand or sit (thumbs up/down) depending on what matches their assessment.
  - Once the students have made their choice, read the Responsibility Scenario (below). Have students consider whether their self-assessment changes based on that specific scenario. If so, they can change their decision.
  - Finally, allow students to offer evidence or comment on the soft skill and scenario.
  - As time allows, repeat the process with perseverance, initiative, and leadership (below).
3. Ask students to reflect on the activity and brainstorm additional soft skills that are important in the workplace. They can record additional skills on **page 7** of their workbook. (Teamwork, problem-solving, communication, being on time, work ethics, adaptability, dependability, creativity, etc.)
4. Emphasize that these skills are valued by almost all employers regardless of the specific job.
5. Remind students that it usually takes years to get the education and develop the skills needed for a career.

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## Soft Skills and Workplace Scenarios

- **Responsibility:**
  - Skill: I take personal responsibility for my actions.
  - Scenario: One hour before I am scheduled to be at work, my ride cancels. I know that I am responsible for finding another ride to work, even if it is inconvenient or uncomfortable for me.
- **Perseverance:**
  - Skill: I persevere (keep trying) even when conditions are unpleasant or I am discouraged.
  - Scenario: I was being considered for a promotion and I believe I was the best candidate for the job. My company gave the promotion to someone else, but I still keep a positive attitude and do my job well.
- **Initiative:**
  - Skill: I see what needs to be done and do it without being told by others.
  - Scenario: I was given four hours to complete a task. I was almost finished after two hours, when a coworker told me to slow down or the boss would give me more work. I finished early and took the initiative to do additional work without being asked.
- **Leadership:**
  - Skill: I can positively influence others when necessary.
  - Scenario: My coworkers were complaining loudly about work and gossiping about other workers while customers were nearby. I persuaded them to talk about a more positive subject and lower their voices.



# ELEVATOR PITCH (10 min)

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## ACTIVITY

The Interacting to Learn video focused on building a personal brand. In life, we often introduce ourselves to others.

1. Have students turn to **page 8 & 9** in their student workbook.
2. Describe an elevator pitch.
  - An elevator pitch is a brief, high-energy presentation that individuals and companies use to promote themselves and their products.
  - An elevator pitch is an effective way to make an introduction and it should last no more than 20 to 30 seconds.
3. Read through a few of the sample elevator pitches at the bottom of this page.
4. Have students create their elevator pitch using the questions provided as prompts of what they might want to include. Circulate, making sure that students are making progress.
5. Time permitting, have students team up in pairs or groups of four and practice presenting their elevator pitches to one another.

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## SAMPLE ELEVATOR PITCHES:

"Hi, my name is Jill. I am an 8<sup>th</sup> grade student at Education Middle School. I love playing basketball and being outside. My dream job is to be a veterinarian. I think I'll be successful at it because I love helping animals and my favorite subject in school is science!"

"Hi, My name is Luis. I am in 8<sup>th</sup> grade at Central Middle School. I am happiest when I am working on the computer. I plan to work in IT someday. I know that I will be taking a lot of math and science classes and I plan to study hard. After high school, I will choose a college or tech school that will help me get into a career."

"My name is Ryan. I go to Midwest Middle School and am in eighth grade. I like to work with my hands and create things. I am planning to take welding classes in high school to see if that is a good fit for me. After high school, I want to become certified in welding and learn more about special kinds of welding."

"Hi, I am Nevaeh. I am in 8<sup>th</sup> grade at City Middle School. I have always been good at budgeting and saving my allowance so I know that I will make a good financial planner someday. I want to learn more about finance and banking and will take all the high school and college courses that I can to get ready for a career."

"Hi, My name is Lindsay. My goal is to be a nurse. I know that I have compassion for people and want to help. In high school, I plan to focus on biology and science classes along with community service projects. I will also take any classes related to medicine and health care. Eventually, I want to specialize in pediatrics."

# ASKING THE RIGHT QUESTIONS (10 min)

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To access the video go to: [www.jasd.org/inspire](http://www.jasd.org/inspire) and scroll down to see video links or type the URL: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=517HJhQVWK0>

Have students turn to **page 10** to take notes while they watch the video and to see a list of sample questions.

## DISCUSSION

- Ask students to share some thoughts that stuck out to them in the video.
- Why is it important to be prepared to *answer* questions in an interview? To *ask* good questions?
- What do you think makes a question “good”?
- In the video, one person said that an interviewer is “trying to hire his next boss.” What did he mean?

### Video Highlights: Asking the Right Questions

- There is a lot of competition in getting jobs - interviews are not only about giving answers, but also about asking the right questions! It's no longer enough to be qualified - you have to shine!
- Asking excellent questions:
  - Shows you are prepared, have good cognitive thinking skills, and are ready to learn more.
  - Shows you care about working there.
  - Shows how interested you are for the job. How much do you really want it?
  - Shows you have done your research (in our digital world - it's all out there).
  - Shows you are engaged and invested.
  - Helps you decide if the career path is a good fit for you to continue pursuing.
- Don't ask routine questions the interviewer has heard before.
- The goal is to make a statement in the form of a question.
  - Help you better understand the career option.
  - Demonstrate your interest.
  - Help you better understand the employer's challenges.
- Questions to ask about a specific company:
  - What exactly does your company value the most?
  - Can you give me some examples of the most and least desirable aspects of the company's culture?
  - What is your company best at?
  - How does this company define and measure success?
- Questions to ask about a specific job:
  - What kinds of processes are in place to help people work collaboratively?
  - In what areas could your team improve?
  - What's the most important thing an employee can accomplish in the first 60 days?
- Questions to ask the interviewer:
  - How long have you been with the company?
  - What do you enjoy most about working there?
  - What makes you good at your job?
- Questions to ask if you are interested in the job:
  - How long is the average tenure of an employee?
  - Where would the company like to be in five years?
  - What special skills or experience would you be looking for at entry level?
  - What opportunities are there for advancement?

# JA INTERVIEW DOS AND DON'TS (5 min)

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## ACTIVITY

Interviewing is a key element to getting a job.

1. Have students turn to **page 11** and review the *JA Interview Dos and Don'ts* chart in their workbook.
2. Remind students that:
  - It's natural to be nervous.
  - Interviewing takes practice.
3. If time allows, have students role-play the proper behaviors for speaking and interacting with business professionals:
  - Have good posture.
  - Make eye contact.
  - Have a proper handshake.
  - Speak up and speak clearly.
  - Listen to their responses.
  - Take notes.

# WHAT TO EXPECT AT *JA INSPIRE* (5 min)

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## DISCUSSION

- Discuss the event.
  - What are you most excited about?
  - What are your questions or concerns?
  - What do you hope to get out of it?
- Discuss the importance of networking.
  - Networking is building relationships with others who can help you find a job and be successful in your work.
  - Research shows that networking is the most common way people find a job. This can include letting people you know (friends, family members, and neighbors) that you are looking for a job. Or, it could mean cultivating business relationships with others who have common career interests.
  - The *JA Inspire* event is an opportunity to try out networking skills.
- Review event logistics. These will vary per school, so check with your administration on details.
  - Where to meet/What time to meet
  - Dress code and behavior
  - Items to bring: e.g., workbook, writing utensil, lanyard/event card, positive attitude, questions, a smile!
  - Items not to bring; e.g., no electronic devices
- Website Resources – have students turn to **page 17** in their student workbook and highlight the websites provided in the textbox.
  - JA Connect – this is a site from JA USA – it provides a wide range of resources for career planning, finances, etc.
  - JA Inspire Homepage on Junior Achievement’s website – this will have a list of all the career stations.
  - Department of Labor: Hot Careers – provides the full list of 30 Hot Careers and provides additional resources students can explore.
  - Bureau of Labor Statistics – students can explore over 800 jobs! They can apply filters to focus on education, projected demand, salary, etc.
- Additional resources will be provided closer to the event.
  - List of exhibitors (career stations) and a link to each exhibitor’s website.
  - Floor map of career stations.
  - Lanyard with an event card. Students will write their name and school on the front. On the back of the card, students will be able to write down their plan for visiting stations. JA will collect these at the end of the event and students will have the **chance to win one of three \$20 gift cards!**

## BEFORE YOU GO

- Be sure to collect student workbooks to keep and redistribute prior to the event.
- Remind students they can explore the Virtual platform anytime now through late April!



JA would like to extend a special thank you to the partners below who helped make *JA Inspire* possible!

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