

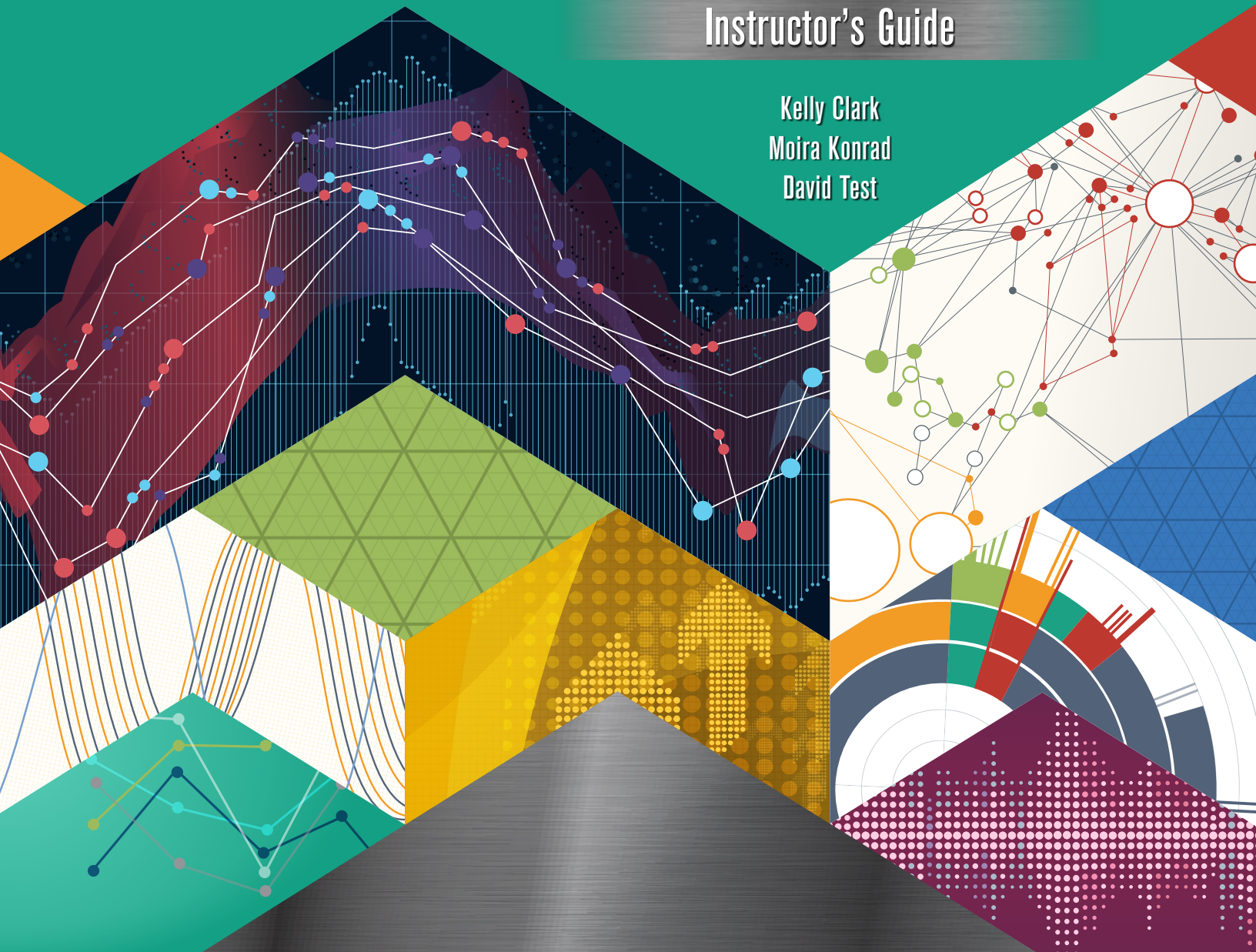
Attainment's

# UPGRADE

Soft Skills Lessons & Assessments

Instructor's Guide

Kelly Clark  
Moirra Konrad  
David Test



**Attainment's**

# **UPGRADE**

**Soft Skills Lessons & Assessments**

## **Instructor's Guide**

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- UPGRADE -

# Overview





## WELCOME TO UPGRADE

**UPGRADE provides a research-based strategy with lessons and assessments that teach soft skills prioritized by employers for both students and adults with disabilities.**

The UPGRADE lessons and assessments are designed to develop soft skills in five critical areas, provide strategies for self-evaluation, goal setting, and self-graphing. There are adapted materials to address the different skill levels of students and adults with disabilities.

UPGRADE focuses on mastering the soft skill lesson, UPGRADE lesson, and U-GRADE assessment before moving on to the next soft skill. Once you have completed all five soft skill areas and have completed UPGRADE

and U-GRADE for each of the units, you will have practiced important skills necessary for successful employment outcomes.

The student will have practiced these skills either in the classroom setting, a job within the school, or a community-based job, using tools that give the student continual feedback on their performance. The student may need to revisit these lessons periodically as they move from the classroom into competitive, integrated employment.



For adults using UPGRADE, these lessons can support their current jobs and the critical skills necessary to maintain employment. Lessons can be repeated based on any specific skill that may need additional teaching, resulting in positive evaluations from their supervisor or employer.

The UPGRADE lessons are versatile for both students in the classroom and adults in jobs. The outcome of completing these lessons and assessments is to reinforce the soft skills required to be successful in current and future employment opportunities.

## What does UPGRADE stand for?

Use the mnemonic to help students remember the steps.

- U** **YOU** evaluate yourself
- P** **PROFESSIONAL** evaluates you
- G** **GRAPH** your scores
- R** **RESTATE** your goal and determine if you met it
- A** **ACKNOWLEDGE** what you did well
- D** **DECIDE** what you need to improve on
- E** **EXECUTE** improvements to improve your goal







## RESEARCH

Three studies have been conducted examining the effects of UPGRADE on the acquisition of soft skills of students with disabilities.

### Study 1: Clark, Konrad, & Test (2018)

*Citation: Clark, K. A., Konrad, M., & Test, D. W. (2018). UPGRADE Your Performance: Improving soft skills of students with disabilities. Journal of Vocational Rehabilitation, 49, 351–365.*

This study investigated the effects of “UPGRADE Your Performance” on soft skills of four 9th grade students with disabilities (e.g., Specific learning disability, autism spectrum disorder, hearing impaired, intellectual disability) across two job sites located within the school. Their ages ranged from 14–16 years old. All the participants had an increase in their soft skill performance in self-selected soft skill areas and generalized those skills to a second in-school job site. This study found an overall improvement regarding self-selected soft skills with both in-school jobs after completing UPGRADE Your Performance tools.



## Study 2: Clark & Test (2018)

*Citation: Clark, K. A., & Test, D. W. (2018). The effects of UPGRADE Your Performance instruction on the soft skills of students with intellectual and developmental disabilities: A study of generalization. Unpublished Dissertation.*

This study investigated the effects of “UPGRADE Your Performance” on the soft skills of two high school students with intellectual and other developmental disabilities participating in an 18–21 program located on a college campus. Their ages ranged from 18–19 years old, and they both had a moderate intellectual disability and autism spectrum disorder. They both were able to improve their soft skills across two soft skill areas.

## Study 3: Clark, Test, & Konrad (2019)

*Citation: Clark, K. A., Test, D. W., & Konrad, M. (2019). Teaching soft skills to students with disabilities using UPGRADE Your Performance. Education and Training in Autism and Developmental Disabilities, 54, 41–56.*

This study investigated the effects of “UPGRADE Your Performance” on soft skills of high school students with disabilities (e.g., Other health impaired, emotional and behavioral disorder, autism, intellectual disability) at both in-school and community-based job sites. The students were all juniors in high school, and their ages ranged from 16–19 years old. Results demonstrated all students improved in a self-selected soft skill area, made gains in their overall performance, were able to self-monitor their own performance using a handheld device, and generalized their skills to their community-based jobs. They also all were able to maintain their performance over time in both their in-school job and their job located in the community.





## HOW TO USE

### Soft Skill Lessons:

- Vocabulary
- Role-play
- Video rating
- Practice on the job
- Goal setting



### UPGRADE Lessons:

- On the job soft skill practice

• U P G R A D E



### U-GRADE Assessments:

- Self-evaluation
- Graphing



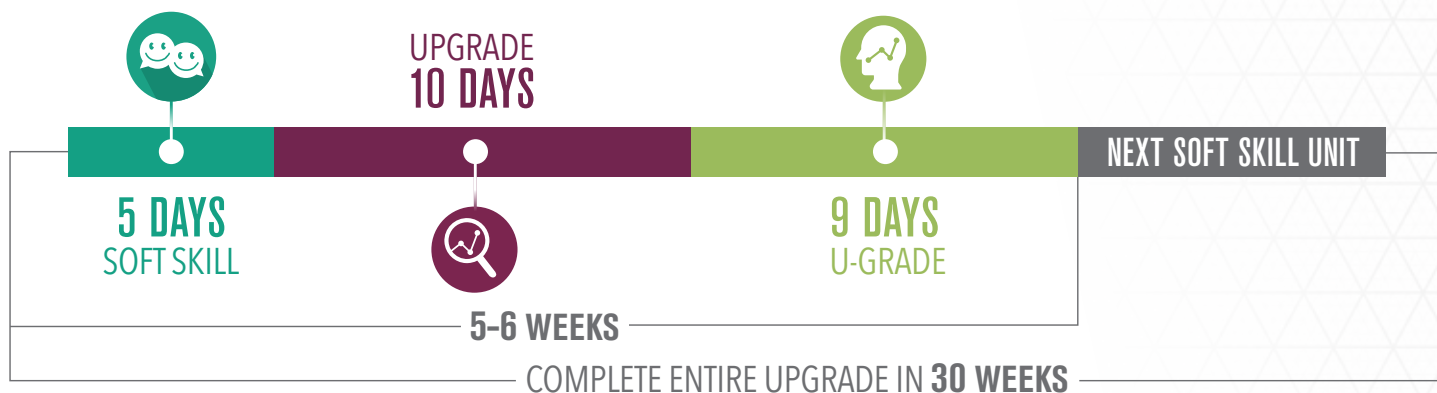


# HOW TO USE

## Planning for Your Students

These lessons have been implemented successfully with students with varying disabilities. Plan ahead to ensure all materials are relevant to your specific students' needs and group size. These lessons can be implemented in groups of 15–20, small groups of 3–5, or even in a one-to-one setting.

Soft skill unit lessons last 45–60 minutes. Plan on 10–15 minutes for an UPGRADE lesson and 10 minutes for U-GRADE. Mastery of one soft skill may be done in approximately 5–6 weeks.







## HOW TO USE

### Before You Start

Visit the Attainment HUB for digital, reproducible, or alternative versions of materials needed for each lesson. Instructions for HUB access can be found on the inside cover of this guide.

The teacher preparation requirements and materials list are provided at the start of each lesson. Lessons and materials are written to meet the varied levels of student skills. The Instructor's Guide includes PowerPoints that follow the teacher's scripted lessons. Look for the slide number icon on the exterior margin indicating which slide should be visible during instruction.

Prior to instruction of the five soft skill lessons, observe and evaluate students' skills in the classroom, school, or community work setting to determine their current competencies. Use the Student Daily Evaluation form found in the appendix as a pre- and post-assessment. These observations will establish a baseline as you begin teaching each soft skill unit. Use the rating scale 1–4 to record your observations of the student in the setting that best offers the opportunity to evaluate the students' soft skills.

The student materials can be adapted by printing versions A, B, or C of the Guided Notes, Graphic Organizers, and Ticket Out the Door cards from the Attainment HUB to differentiate instruction.



## Adults with Jobs

The studies conducted using UPGRADE materials were used with students with disabilities ages 14–21. However, these materials can be adapted to use in employment settings with adults with disabilities.

**The following adaptations could be made when working with adults:**

- Consider using digital versus paper worksheets on a handheld device
- Adapt lesson examples for community job settings
- Use community employment versus school-age scenarios
- Use the worker's current job and coworkers when providing soft skills training
- Engage the employer/supervisor in the evaluation component of UPGRADE
- Use the one-to-one lesson plan with the job coach and worker
- Use the small group lesson plan recommendations for peer support and feedback when there is more than one worker or if there are opportunities to bring together workers

## Classroom Students

The UPGRADE materials can be used for classroom tasks or job tasks located within the school. They can be used to teach students to improve their soft skills while performing the classroom tasks, as well as jobs that are located within the school building.

**The following adaptations could be made when working with students:**

- Adapt lesson examples for in-school jobs or in-classroom tasks
- Use school-age scenarios versus community employment scenarios
- Engage the general education teacher in the evaluation component of UPGRADE

### Who uses UPGRADE?

- Job coaches
- Vocational rehabilitation counselors
- Teachers
- Trainers



## LESSON PLAN OPTIONS

The lesson plans are designed to be flexible for the teacher to customize to their students' needs and group size. Outlines are provided for small group instruction, one-to-one instruction, as well as three-day and five-day instruction. The Instructor's Guide has been written for a five-day lesson plan.

- The **small group** option offers more opportunities for peer support and feedback. The instruction includes all five lessons for each soft skill with group work activities.
- The **one-to-one** option allows the student to select soft skills to work on based on their performance scores before instruction. The lessons are expedited, and more time is spent on assessment.
- The **five-day** option provides more time to teach the soft skill area, as well as more activities spread out across the school week.
- The **three-day** option will still allow time to teach the content but with fewer activities and less time devoted to specific concepts.

*See appendix for detailed lesson plans.*







# ADAPTATIONS

Alternative versions of Guided Notes, Graphic Organizers, and Ticket Out the Door cards are provided on the Attainment HUB to differentiate instruction.\*



## Guided Notes and Graphic Organizers versions:

- A** Students are encouraged to circle or highlight the key terms.
- B** Students are expected to fill in the blank.
- C** Students are expected to write out their responses.

## Ticket Out the Door card versions:

- A** Includes symbol support.
- B** Without symbol support.

\*The Attainment HUB provides online access to all digital content, including student reproducibles. See instructions on the inside cover of this guide.





## COMPONENTS

The UPGRADE curriculum includes the following printed materials. Access the Attainment Hub for reproducible content using the code printed on the inside cover.



Instructor's Guide



Plus/Delta Chart



### Digital Materials:

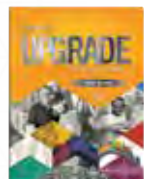
- Student Workbook
- Consumable Student Workbook
  - Guided notes (3 versions)
- Graphic organizers (3 versions)
- PowerPoints
- Plus/delta chart
- Evaluation forms
- Vocabulary flashcards
- Response cards
- Ticket out the door cards (2 versions)



Student Workbook



Response Cards



Consumable Student Workbook



Vocabulary Flashcards



Graphic Organizers



Tickets Out the Door



Assessment Plus App



GoWorksheet Maker App

## Icon Key



PowerPoint Slide #



Read Aloud



Prompt or Assist



Learning Objective



Allow Time



Play Video



Ticket Out the Door



Teacher Preparation



Materials



General Feedback



Students Share



UPGRADE



U-GRADE



Transition Back to the Classroom

- unit one -

# Introduction to Soft Skills





# Introduction to Soft Skills

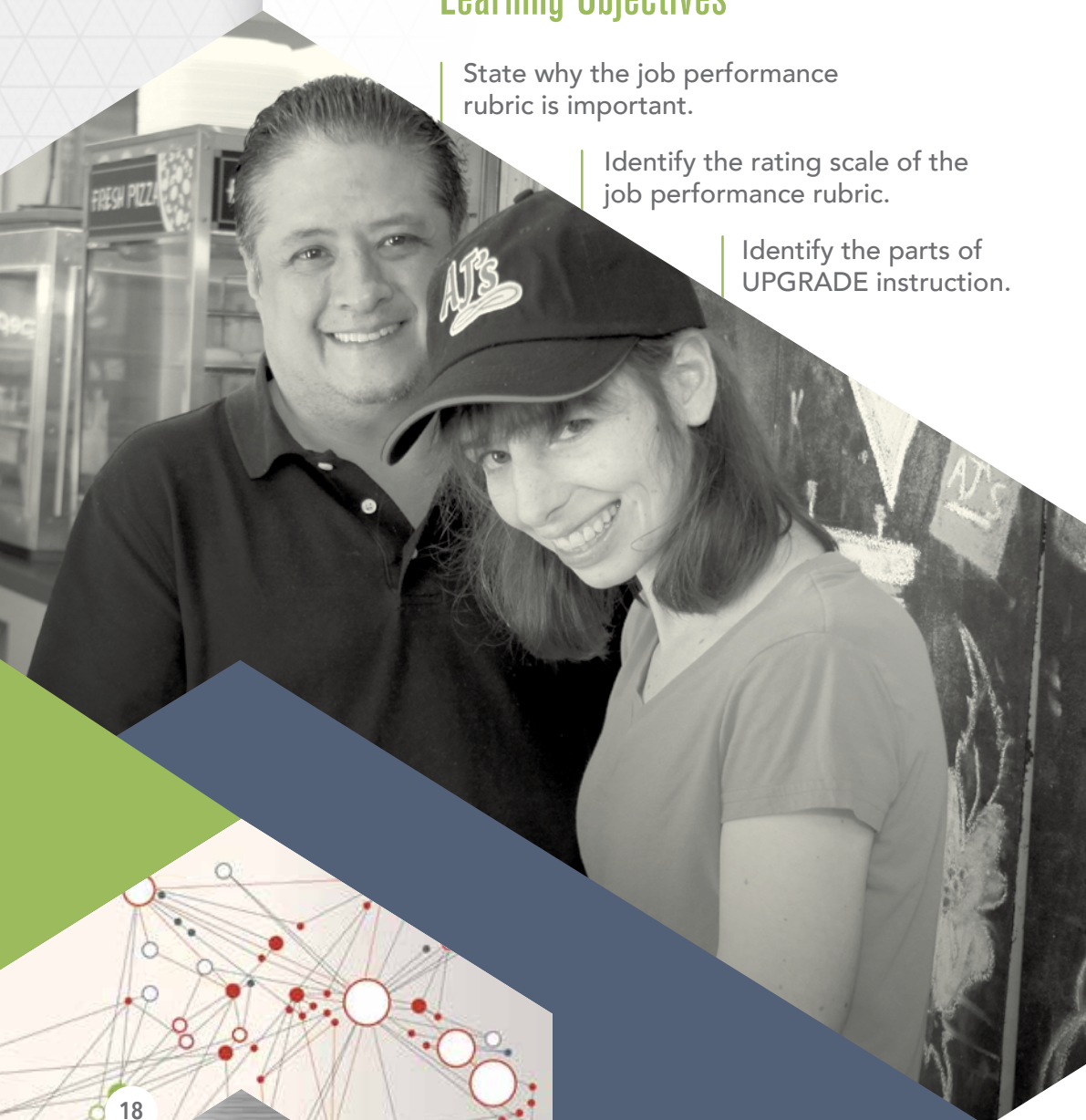
**Lesson 1** Introduction to Job Performance Rubric and UPGRADE Instruction

## Learning Objectives

State why the job performance rubric is important.

Identify the rating scale of the job performance rubric.

Identify the parts of UPGRADE instruction.







# Introduction to Job Performance Rubric and UPGRADE Instruction

## LESSON PLAN ONE

*Before you begin, visit the Attainment HUB for digital, reproducible, or alternative versions of materials for this lesson. See inside cover for HUB access.*



### TEACHER PREPARATION

- Have all materials (listed below)
- Display the Job Performance Rubric
- Assign jobs for inside or outside the classroom  
*Skills can also be practiced during classroom instruction*



### MATERIALS

- Student Workbook
- Student Daily Evaluation form
- Work board or a white sheet of paper per student
- Students' baseline scores on the rubric
- PowerPoint of Lesson 1 Introduction to Soft Skills

*Optional materials: expo markers, projector, sample highlighted rubric for modeling, folder*



### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- I can state why the job performance rubric is important.
- I can identify the rating scale of the job performance rubric.
- I can identify the parts of UPGRADE instruction.



### GENERAL FEEDBACK PROCEDURES

- When the student responds correctly, provide enthusiastic affirmation/praise (e.g., "Correct," "Excellent," "Yes, you got it.").
- When the student makes a correct response that is not quite complete, provide enthusiastic affirmation/praise followed by a statement of the FULL correct answer.
- When the student responds incorrectly, or does not respond, prompt using a model-test format (e.g., "To get a level 4 on the rubric for attitude and cooperation, an employee should do the right things every day. What does an employee need to do to get a level 4 on the rubric for attitude and cooperation?" Then follow the feedback procedures).





# Learning Objectives

(5 MINUTES)

## Teacher's Script

Today we are going to begin learning about a job performance rubric and a new strategy called UPGRADE. Over the next few weeks you will be learning how to improve your job performance, set goals, and track your progress. But before we start, we need to get organized so our lessons will run smoothly.

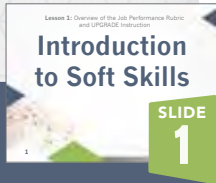
Our lessons over the next several weeks are going to follow a specific routine, so you will always know what to expect. You and I will meet today and tomorrow. We will be using the workbook that I gave you today, and you will keep the workbook in your classroom. So when you come in tomorrow, you will get your workbook before you and I start our lesson. Starting tomorrow, [student's name], what should you do when it is time for us to do our lesson?

⋮ Solicit response like, "Go to the bin and take out my workbook, and then go sit at my desk."

👤 Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.

Let's look at the objectives for today's lesson.

📖 Point to the day's objectives, and read them out loud.



Display slide 1 of the Unit 1 PowerPoint at the start of instruction. Follow the slide number icons as you progress through the lesson.



Job Performance Rubric				
	EXCELLENT 4	STRONG 3	GOOD 2	POOR 1
	Always	Usually	Needs to improve	Does not try
Attitude and Cooperation	Shows respect; Accepts constructive criticism; Shows initiative; Cooperates with others	Respectful; Accepts constructive criticism; Shows initiative; Cooperates with others	Being respectful; Accepting constructive criticism; Showing initiative; Cooperation with others	To be respectful; To accept constructive criticism; To show initiative; To cooperate with others
Reliability	Reliable with perfect attendance; Neat, clean, and prepared; On time and begins promptly	Reliable with good attendance; Neat, clean, and prepared; On time and begins promptly	Being reliable with good attendance; Being prepared; Beginning promptly	To be reliable with good attendance; To be prepared; To begin promptly
Productivity and On-Task	An independent worker; Stays on-task; Works at a steady pace	An independent worker and stays focused; Stays on-task; Works at an average pace	Working independently; Staying focused and on-task; Working at a consistent pace	To be independent; To stay focused; To stay on-task; To improve pace
Quality of Work	Checks quality; Shows pride; Works diligently; Completes work correctly	Checks quality; Shows pride; Works diligently; Completes work correctly with few prompts	Checking quality; Showing pride; Working diligently; Completing work correctly with little help	To work diligently or check quality of work; To show pride; To complete work





# Instruction


(35 MINUTES)

## Teacher's Script

 Have students open the workbook to the Job Performance Rubric.


First, let's talk about why the rubric is important. The rubric is an example of how an employer may rate an employee's performance on the job. Instead of getting a grade like an A, B, C, D, or F, employers may give employees a rating. Did you know that teachers and principals get ratings instead of grades? They get rated on a rubric as part of their evaluation for their job. On this rubric, the best score an employee can get is a 4, next best is a 3, okay is a 2, and not very good is a 1. Why do you think learning about this rubric is important?



 Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.

Why do you think the job performance rubric is important for employees? Use your work boards to hold up any reasons you think this job performance rubric would be important for employees, or raise your hand to share what you think.




 Write out what you see on the boards or what students shared verbally, or repeat them verbally to the class.

These are all really good guesses. Now I am going to share with you the top three reasons why the job performance rubric is important.



There are several reasons why learning the job rubric is important. First, it can help you get a job in the future. If you get better at these skills, you may have a better chance at getting a paid job. What is the first reason the job rubric is important?

 Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.

We all want to be able to get a job in the future so we can make money to do the things we want to do, such as live on our own or with our family, do things for fun, and buy things we want or need.





## Teacher's Script



Can someone read each of the categories on the rubric?



*Point to the left side of the rubric on the PowerPoint that states each category of the rubric.*

*Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.*

These are some of the skills you are going to learn more about and work on over the next few weeks.



The second reason these skills are important is because these are all skills employers want employees to have. Can anyone tell me the second reason why these skills are important?



*If the student does not know, prompt by pointing to the PowerPoint. Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.*

These skills are important to employers, and they want future employees to have a good attitude, be cooperative, and be on time and reliable by coming to work every day. They want someone who can be on task while working, do quality work, communicate appropriately with others, work with other people by helping out when needed, and get along with their coworkers.



The good thing about each of these areas is that they are all important in any job you do, and they are skills that everyone can do! Here is an example of the scoring sheet based on the rubric that you will be graded on while working on your jobs. You will also get to grade yourself on this scoring sheet. On the scoring guide there are key skills areas under each part of the rubric. Each of these skills under the main area will be used to grade you, and you will grade yourself. We will learn more about how to do that in future lessons.







## Teacher's Script

The third reason these skills are important is they can help you keep a job once you have it. If you can learn to do these skills well, you will be a great employee, and employers will want you to keep working for them. Can anyone tell me the third reason these skills are important?



*If the student does not know, prompt by pointing to the PowerPoint. Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.*

Let's review what we have learned so far. What are the reasons these skills are important? Can anyone remember the first reason?



*If they need help remembering, click on slide 5, and the first reason will appear on the slide. Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.*

Can anyone remember the second reason?



*If they need help remembering, click on slide 7, and the second reason will appear on the slide. Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.*

Can anyone remember the third reason?



*If they need help remembering, click on slide 9, and the third reason will appear on the slide. Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.*







## Teacher's Script



Let's look at the grading scale for these areas of the rubric.



*Point to the top of the scoring guide.*

Can anyone read what it says it means to be a 1 on the rubric?



*Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.*

Can anyone read what it says it means to be a 2 on the rubric?



*Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.*

Can anyone read what it says it means to be a 3 on the rubric?



*Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.*

Can anyone read what it says it means to be a 4 on the rubric?



*Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.*

Tomorrow we will go into more of what that means for a specific area of the rubric so you really understand how to score yourself and how you will be scored.





# UPGRADE Instruction


(10 MINUTES)

## Teacher's Script

We are now going to talk about UPGRADE instruction. The UPGRADE Instruction worksheet in your workbook explains the UPGRADE strategy. This instruction is going to help you learn how to improve your performance on the rubric.

 Have students open the workbook to the UPGRADE instruction chart.

When you can get an upgrade on your phone or on a seat at a concert, is that a good or bad thing?

 Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.


Yes, when you get an upgrade on something like a cell phone, you get a newer or better phone. This instruction is going to help you upgrade, or improve, your job performance so you can get a job, do well on your in-school jobs, and complete all of your job hours. Look at your worksheet. It explains what each letter in UPGRADE stands for.

 Read the information to the students by going through each of the steps.


Let's review. What does the U stand for?

 Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.


Now what does the P stand for?

 Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.


What does the G stand for?

 Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.

What does the R stand for?

 Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.

What does the A stand for?

 Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.



### UPGRADE Instruction

Strategy	Explanation
U You evaluate yourself	You will evaluate your performance on the job rubric.
P Professional evaluates you	Your supervisor will evaluate you on the rubric.
G Graph	Graph the scores of both scores and compare them.
R Restate	Restate your goal and determine if you met it.
A Acknowledge	Acknowledge what you did well.
D Decide	Decide what you can do better in order to meet your goal.
E Execute	Execute improvements tomorrow to meet your goal.



### Teacher's Script

What does the D stand for?



*Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.*

What does the E stand for?



*Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.*

Each day after working on your job, you will follow these steps.



You evaluate yourself



Professional evaluates you



Graph your scores



Restate your goal and determine if you met it



Acknowledge what you did well



Decide what you need to improve on



Execute improvements tomorrow to improve your goal

## Lesson Closing

(5 MINUTES)

### Teacher's Script



Today we learned about a rubric that can be used to rate employees on the job. We learned about UPGRADE instruction and the job performance rubric. Do you think this rubric can help you become a better employee when you go to your job?



*Provide feedback according to general feedback procedures.*

Tomorrow we will do more lessons on the first area of the job performance rubric, attitude and cooperation. Thank you for working so hard today.



*Have students return workbooks where they belong and transition the students back to the classroom.*

