

Instructor's Guide

for

Best Recession-Proof Jobs

Overview

When an economy experiences a major decline in growth and activity, it is known as a recession. The impact of a recession is usually widespread, and it can affect just about anyone. During a recession, layoffs are common as companies are forced to cut costs in order to preserve profits. Job security becomes less a matter of personal work performance and more a matter of stock performance. The truth is, no one's job is absolutely secure, but a recession makes keeping a job even more difficult—and often more important.

While a recession will impact employers and workers across the board, there *are* industries, fields, and careers that fare better than others. Often this is because of the inherent nature of the industry or career itself. Industries with a reliable customer base or careers that cannot easily be downsized or outsourced do exist. This video will introduce your students to some of them. Whether they are looking for their next job or simply exploring career opportunities that offer greater security in tough economic times, this video can help students and job seekers make smarter career choices.

Remember that no job is completely recession proof, however. While some jobs are more resistant than others, it is often what employees *do*—the ways they make themselves valuable and even indispensable—that ensures their continued success, even in a turbulent economy.

This video is organized around groups of occupations or *career clusters*. Feel free to pause in between the overview of each cluster for activities and discussion as your own schedule dictates. The video also contains a second part with informational overviews of several of the specific occupations discussed. You are encouraged to integrate those overviews into your class as well.

Presentation Suggestions

Begin by asking students how the recession has affected them personally. Have they or someone they are close to lost a job due to downsizing? How has it affected their own

spending habits? What changes have they noticed in the economy as a whole? What steps have they taken to cope with those changes?

Then ask students if they think there are businesses, industries, or kinds of workers who are not affected by a recession, or at least not *as* affected. What are they and what makes them recession proof? Have they ever considered working in one of those industries?

Point out that while no job is absolutely recession proof, there are industries and occupations that are more stable, and there are steps that students can take, as employees, to better ensure their own positions. Finally, if the purpose of the class is to explore possible careers, remind students to keep an open mind. They shouldn't choose a career simply because it is recession proof (the recession will end eventually). Instead, they should watch the video and see whether any of the occupations presented match their interests, goals, and education. If so, then the fact that they are also recession resistant should make them worthy of further exploration.

When you feel students have begun thinking about these issues, give them the **Anticipation Quiz** to complete prior to watching the video. If you wish, allow the students to state their answers and discuss them.

Show the video. Encourage students to take notes or to make changes to the answers they put down for the Anticipation Quiz while watching the video.

At the conclusion of the video, ask students to discuss any changes they made to their answers on the Anticipation Quiz as a result of information they learned. Follow up this discussion with the **Activities**.

Use the **Discussion Questions** to request oral or written responses from students or assign the questions as homework essays.

Give the **Quick Quiz** at the conclusion of class and correct the quizzes as a group. Assign the **Homework Option**, if desired.

Anticipation Quiz

Directions: Answer these questions as completely as possible. You may revise your answers as you watch the video.

1. True or false: No job is absolutely recession proof.
2. What are some of the most recession-proof industries?
3. What are some steps you can take to make yourself recession proof?
4. True or false: A recession only really affects those in manufacturing and industry.

Answer Key

1. True
2. Health care; Education and Training; Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics; Law and Public Safety; Government and Public Administration. Answers may vary.
3. Work a job that is at the core of the business. Be adaptable. Stretch beyond your job description. Answers may vary.
4. False

Activities

Activity #1

Title: Taking an Interest in Your Interests

Format: Individual

Time: 20–30 minutes

Materials: Worksheet, pen

Procedure:

1. Use the worksheet on the last page of this study guide to get students thinking about how their interests relate to career clusters. Have them rank career clusters from 1 to 16 based on how much interest they have in each.
2. Students should then apply what they've learned from the video to their choices. Have them go back through their ranking and consider which clusters were more or less recession proof.
3. Have students choose the career cluster they are most interested in exploring further. Then have them list three jobs associated with that cluster that they would like to research in more depth.

Activity #2

Title: This One's a Keeper

Format: Small groups

Time: 20–25 minutes

Materials: Index cards, pens

Procedure:

1. Have each student take an index card. Tell them to list the five qualities they think make them most valuable as an employee. These should be personal qualities or transferable skills (such as dependability or a good writer), not skills specific to a particular job (such as knowing a particular computer programming language). Tell students that these are the kinds of traits and skills they would emphasize on a generic resume being sent out to hundreds of different employers.

2. Gather the cards, and then break students into groups of three. Shuffle the cards and then give each group three. Tell them that they are all joint owners of a company that needs to downsize and that the three cards they were given represent three of their current employees. Instruct them that they have to cut two of those positions. Allow groups 5 to 10 minutes to debate the merits of each employee and make their decisions. (If you'd like, you can assign specific companies to each group so that they know what products or services they are selling.)
3. Once the small groups have chosen the one employee they would keep, bring the class together to share what went into the decision-making process. Why did groups keep the employee they did? What qualities and skills stood out? Was the decision difficult? What makes for a recession-proof employee?

Discussion Questions

1. What makes a job or a cluster of related jobs recession proof? Why are some jobs more susceptible to downturns in the economy than others?
2. The video stressed that there were many factors that influence which occupations and industries experience growth while others decline. Technology, for example, has changed the way businesses operate. In turn it has created many new jobs and made others obsolete. What other changes or trends—outside of the recession—have had a major impact on the world of work and the kinds of jobs available?
3. While the purpose of the video is to introduce you to occupations and industries that are more secure in tough economic times, it's not simply a matter of going out and getting one of those jobs. The key to recession proofing your career is being indispensable yourself. What do you think makes an employee invaluable to a company? What could you do to make yourself indispensable as a worker?

Quick Quiz

Note: You may read these questions out loud, allowing time for students to respond, or copy and hand this out as a written exercise.

Directions: Indicate whether each statement is true or false, according to the video.

1. Health care is America's largest and fastest-growing industry.
2. Government jobs tend to be recession proof.
3. Jobs in information technology should be avoided because they are all being outsourced.
4. Manufacturing jobs are relatively secure during a recession.
5. There is nothing you can do as a worker to recession proof your job.

6. Often public transportation remains steady or even increases during a recession.
7. Job shadowing is a useful way to explore occupations you are interested in.
8. The workers who are most likely to keep their jobs are the ones who are most adaptable.

Answer Key

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| 1. True | 5. False |
| 2. True | 6. True |
| 3. False | 7. True |
| 4. False | 8. True |

Homework Option

At some point during the video or discussion or as part of class activities, students should have listed at least two or three occupations that they are interested in learning more about. Have each student choose one of those occupations and research it using one of the online sources below. Alternatively, they can go to their local library for similar print resources. Students should be sure to research growth, earnings, openings, job tasks, work environment, and the amount of education required. Have each student prepare a two-minute presentation to give to the class about the job they researched.

O*NET Online: <http://online.onetcenter.org/>

Occupational Outlook Handbook: <http://www.bls.gov/OCO/>

Matching Interests to Career Clusters

Cluster	Description	Activities	Ranking
Agriculture, Food, and Natural Resources	An interest in working with plants, animals, forests, or mineral resources for agriculture, horticulture, conservation, and other purposes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study soil samples • Raise animals • Grow flowers or trees 	
Architecture and Construction	An interest in designing, assembling, and maintaining buildings and other structures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Design buildings • Install electricity • Operate heavy equipment 	
Arts, Audio/Video Technology, and Communications	An interest in creatively expressing feelings or ideas, in communicating news or information, or in performing.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write magazine articles • Take photographs • Perform in a play 	
Business, Management, and Administration	An interest in making an organization run smoothly.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage others • Keep accurate records • Show leadership ability 	
Education and Training	An interest in helping people learn.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grade tests • Prepare course objectives • Plan group activities 	
Finance	An interest in helping people and businesses secure their financial future.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Predict financial trends • Analyze stocks • Prepare budgets 	
Government and Public Administration	An interest in helping a government agency serve the needs of the public.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Investigate fraud • Be a court clerk • Plan public programs 	
Health Science	An interest in helping people and animals be healthy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer in a hospital • Research cures • Care for the infirm 	
Hospitality and Tourism	An interest in providing others with a clean environment, good food and drink, comfortable accommodations, and recreation.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cut hair • Cook or bake for people • Plan trips for others 	
Human Services	An interest in improving people's social, mental, emotional, or spiritual well-being.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Do social work • Counsel others • Interview people 	
Information Technology	An interest in designing, developing, managing, and supporting information systems.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write computer programs • Maintain network security • Develop Web sites 	
Law, Public Safety, Corrections, and Security	An interest in upholding people's rights or in protecting people and property.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guard property • Fight fires • Investigate crimes 	
Manufacturing	An interest in processing materials into products or repairing products using machines or hand tools.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inspect products • Install auto parts • Repair electrical systems 	
Marketing, Sales, and Service	An interest in persuading others to buy something or adopt your point of view.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote ideas • Sell products by phone • Raise money for a cause 	
Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics	An interest in discovering, collecting, and analyzing information about the natural world, life sciences, and human behavior.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct experiments • Research • Solve math problems 	
Transportation, Distribution, and Logistics	An interest in operations that move people or materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drive long distances • Pilot an airplane • Operate a boat 	