IT Support –
Facilitator Guide

DIGITAL CAREERS TOOLKIT
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DOWNLOADABLE GUIDES

IT Support - Facilitator Guide

This guide is prepared for teachers who use the Digital Career Toolkit as class activities, or counselors who use the Toolkit as a coaching guide.

Facilitation Suggestions

Below are suggestions to use the 'Explore Careers- IT Support' section, with additional resources.

Because some of the activities introduce the technical skills associated with the career, it is recommended that as a facilitator you try them first.

In my class	Suggestion	Learners will be able to
I want to do a mini-lesson to generate career awareness	Learners read "IT Support could be your future career" and watch the 4 minute video	Name what IT is and say why it is important
I want one lesson to introduce IT careers as part of a related unit	Learners read "IT Support could be your future career", "Understand the Business" and "Explore Career Paths." They can also watch some of the videos in "Meet Professionals who work in the Field"	Name what IT is and say why it could be a good entry point to a career in tech
I want to include 2-3 lessons on IT careers as part of a tech course or career studies unit	Learners work through all the IT Support Career Exploration sections in the toolkit. See Lesson Suggestions below.	Name what IT is, say why they could be good at it, and write up their plan to pursue this path
I am working individually with learners as part of their postsecondary	Learners work through all the IT Support Career Exploration sections in the toolkit. See Lesson Suggestions below.	Name several jobs and pathways within the field of IT, say why they are interested in

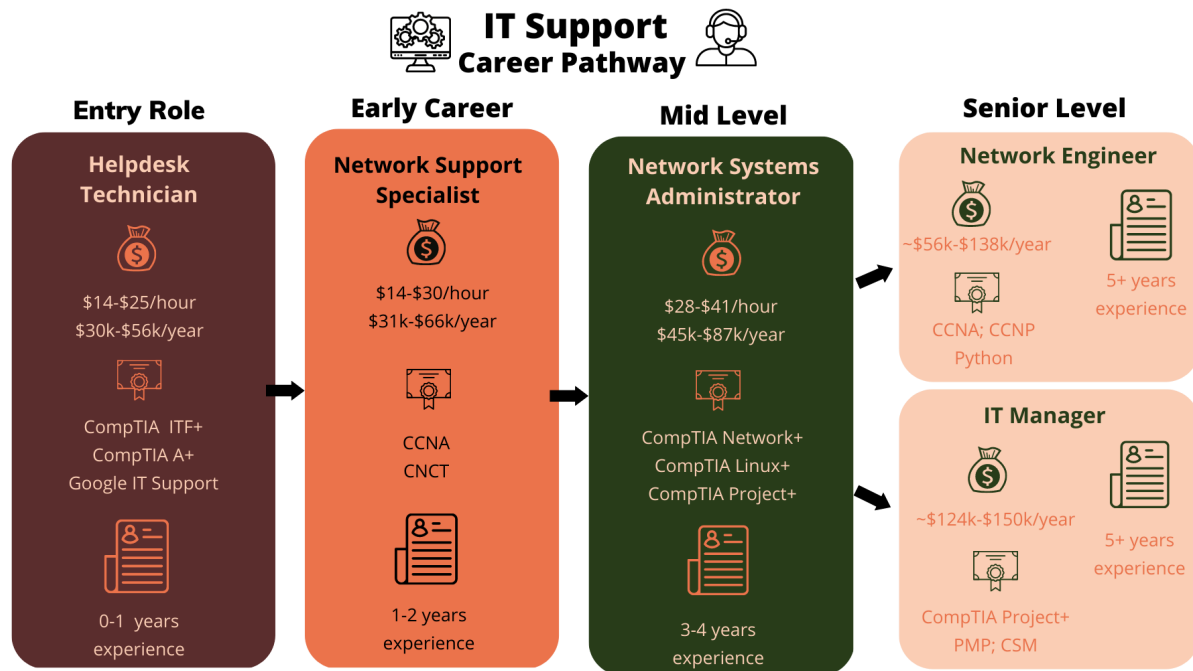| planning.		pursuing this path, and add workforce training options to their postsecondary plan

'Try it Out Now' activity - IT Support

The goal of this activity is to give learners the experience of working in IT Support. Even spending 20-30 minutes on these activities gives a real sense of what IT professionals do every day, and will help learners thoughtfully consider if they are intrigued and challenged enough to go further.

- Have learners watch YouTube videos that orient them to how computers work. For example:

    - [What does what in your computer? Computer parts Explained](#) (8 minutes)

    - [Khan Academy and Code.org | Hardware and Software](#) (5 minutes)

    - [Computer Basics: Inside a Computer](#) (2 minutes)

- **'Want to try it out now?' toolkit activity:** Learners brainstorm the steps an IT technician would take to solve common problems. *Note: there is likely more than one solution.* IT support often requires creativity to solve problems and there are multiple ways to fix things. Encourage learners to solve these problems collaboratively. Remind them that it is good practice to use Google to research the problem and watch YouTube videos of other people solving similar problems.

    - Help! My keyboard has stopped working
    - My printer won't print
    - My monitor is frozen
    - Come quickly - my internet connection isn't connecting and I have a zoom meeting in 10 minutes
    - I'm not receiving any emails
    - My emails are bouncing back
    - I can't get into my system and I forgot my password

- This video is lengthy (41 minutes) but shows learners in detail how IT technicians solve problems: [Common Level 1 IT Issues (Desktop Support, Technical Support, IT Support)](#)

The Job Outlook

IT Support is an accessible entry point into tech careers. Facilitators can encourage learners to consider this as an entry point and understand how to grow a career from there.

- Understand the job outlook: For information, see [Computer Support Specialists : Occupational Outlook Handbook](#)

- Understand the Career Path: IT Support provides feeder roles to many careers in tech, as seen below:

IT Support Career Pathway

Entry Role	Early Career	Mid Level	Senior Level
Helpdesk Technician	**Network Support Specialist**	**Network Systems Administrator**	**Network Engineer**
$14-$25/hour $30k-$56k/year	$14-$30/hour $31k-$66k/year	$28-$41/hour $45k-$87k/year	~$56k-$138k/year
CompTIA ITF+ CompTIA A+ Google IT Support	CCNA CNCT	CompTIA Network+ CompTIA Linux+ CompTIA Project+	CCNA; CCNP Python — 5+ years experience
0-1 years experience	1-2 years experience	3-4 years experience	**IT Manager** ~$124k-$150k/year; CompTIA Project+ PMP; CSM — 5+ years experience

Sources: Glassdoor, Payscale, Indeed, Salary.com, OBT

Note: exact salaries, experience, and certifications may change over time and vary depending on location. For the most accurate information, regularly check the sources listed for updates.

- IT Support positions are accessible through certification, and typically do not require a degree. See "[How Certifications Fit In](#)"

- Many tuition-free programs prepare learners for certification and entry level positions in IT. See "[Navigate Training Pathways](#)"

Skills to Pay the Bills

As a facilitator, you can encourage a strength-based and growth mindset. IT support involves troubleshooting which sometimes involves trial and error and experimentation. It is normal not to get it right the first time – this goes with the territory in IT Support!

- ***What you bring to the table*** - This section emphasizes durable skills that learners already have and/or can cultivate - problem solving, communication, customer support/empathy, with a focus on particular strengths that are important to these roles.
- ***What you will learn*** - The section outlines skills to be learned - especially technical skills that can be demonstrated through certifications.

Using the Job Description

- Designed as a synthesizing or culminating activity
- Note that the Job Description is an edited version of a posted job. The name of the company is removed. The Job Description is skill-based - it does not require a degree.
- Provide context to understand the components of a job description
- Suggested activities:
    - Highlight the 'employability skills' like communication or problem solving.
        - Note which of these you feel you are already good at
    - Highlight the technical skills required (in a different color)
        - Note which of these can be learned and demonstrated via certification
    - Ask students to project into the future and write a 250 word paragraph expressing interest in the job
        - This can be extended to Make a Plan to pursue training and position themselves to be ready to apply for this kind of job in the future
    - Create mock interview panels with learners in which they interview for this job as a culmination of what they learned through the Toolkit

Using the Toolkit to Make a Plan

See Facilitator Guide to Make a Plan

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