

# SKILLS INSTRUMENT

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## Instructions for Library Managers

This instrument is designed to help you assess the skills your staff have gained as the result of your staff development activity. The instrument is focused on reference interview skills for personal finance questions, specifically whether staff can identify the financial concept embedded in a patron question and select an appropriate resource to answer the question. You may need to adapt the questions to match the concepts you have included in your training session.

Typically, it is recommended to use an instrument like this both as a pre-test and as a post-test. The pre-test would help you assess what your staff know initially about personal finance topics and may help you shape the training that you deliver. The post-test could then be compared to the pre-test to identify what has been learned. Due to the open-ended nature of this assessment, however, some managers may choose to use it only as a post-test. This is because staff members without previous knowledge or training would likely find it very difficult to complete as a pre-test. In addition, completing and scoring an open-ended assessment can be time-consuming.

## Instructions for Library Staff

Each item below is centered on a patron question. For each question, please identify the underlying financial concept and one or more resources that could be used to answer the question.

1. A woman asks you where she can find information about paying for college.
  - A. What are the underlying financial concepts in this question?
  
  - B. What resource(s) could be used to answer this question?
  
2. A high school student is working on a school project and needs to figure out the difference between stocks and bonds.
  - A. What are the underlying financial concepts in this question?
  
  - B. What resource(s) could be used to answer this question?
  
3. A woman tells you that she and her husband have accumulated a high balance on their credit card and don't know what to do.
  - A. What are the underlying financial concepts in this question?
  
  - B. What resource(s) could be used to answer this question?
  
4. A man asks who he can trust to help him with his investments.
  - A. What are the underlying financial concepts in this question?
  
  - B. What resource(s) could be used to answer this question?

5. A couple tells you that they are trying to save money to buy a house and want to know how to get started.
  - A. What are the underlying financials concept in this question?
  
  - B. What resource(s) could be used to answer this question?
  
6. A man tells you he is worried about having his credit card information stolen.
  - A. What are the underlying financial concepts in this question?
  
  - B. What resource(s) could be used to answer this question?

## Answer Key

- 1A. Concepts include budgeting and saving, student loans, debt, scholarships
- 1B. Possible resources include StudentLoans.gov, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, MyMoney.gov, FINRA Smart Saving for College
  
- 2A. Concepts include investing, investment products
- 2B. Possible resources include FINRA Smart Investing, Investor.gov
  
- 3A. Concepts include consumer debt, financial emergencies
- 3B. Possible resources include Cooperative Extension Service eXtension Personal Finance, reputable local consumer credit counseling services, SaveAndInvest.org
  
- 4A. Concepts include choosing financial professionals, financial fraud
- 4B. Possible resources include FINRA BrokerCheck, SaveAndInvest.org, state securities regulators
  
- 5A. Concepts include homebuying, budgeting, saving, credit
- 5B. Possible resources include MyMoney.gov, FDIC budgeting tools, Consumer Financial Protection Bureau
  
- 6A. Concepts include identity theft, protection
- 6B. Possible resources include Federal Trade Commission, Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation, AnnualCreditReport.com