



Action Plan

The purpose of an action plan is to plan concrete steps that you need to execute to realize your goal. The action plan helps you figure out *how* you will achieve your goal and helps you organize your efforts to get there. Get started on these components during your YouthSpark Live event, and continue to work on it afterwards. Find resources at the YouthSpark Hub to help you along the way, www.microsoft.com/youthsparkhub.

What is your primary **goal** for your future?

Make sure your goal is SMART:

S pecific
M easurable
A ttainable
R ealistic
T imely

Identify your **mission** for your experience with YouthSpark. What do you want to learn that will help you towards your goal?

Describe what you want to **do or create**.

It is okay if you're not sure what your job title might be, but what type of work are you interested in? Do you want to create an app? Solve a problem? Have a great business idea?

Identify at least 2 **skills** you already have for this, and 2 things that you need to learn how to do.

Find resources to work on the skills you need to improve.

We'll get you started with one skill we think is valuable for everyone these days. Use the handout and the YouthSpark Hub (www.microsoft.com/youthsparkhub) to help you find programs and training resources.

< next page >



Skills you have, need, or want to improve	Skill level, from no experience to expert	Where to go to improve <i>Ask around! Use the YouthSpark Hub!</i>
Creating and editing professional documents with Microsoft Office: Word, Excel, PowerPoint		Microsoft Digital Literacy Online training

Who else is deeply involved in your goal?

In business, people or groups who will be greatly affected by you achieving your business goals are called Stakeholders. Depending on your goal, you could have personal stakeholders, like family or mentors who are helping you along the way, or you could have business stakeholders, like investors and cofounders. These people or groups can be good to keep in mind as you build the path to your goal.

Plan the next 3 actions you will take towards achieving your goal.

Make sure to consider immediate, short-term (in the next 30 days) and longer-term (in the next 90 days) steps that you can take. If you can identify more than 3, great!

Next action:	Target timeframe to complete this step:	Who can help you? Think about connections you have and ones you need to make.
1.		
2.		
3.		
4.		



Employment: Technology proficiency and preparation for all jobs

Today, nearly all jobs require at least a basic level of technology skills in order to complete the work. From online job applications to timecards, to email and web-based research, YouthSpark has resources that can help you get training, and get the skills to get ahead!

Investigate the types of **careers** in your area that fit what you want to do. Use information provided, online resources, and ask around!

- ❖ **Research:** Local employment information

Identify 3 ways this work uses **technology**.

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What programs can you use to **learn more** about these technologies?

- ❖ **Link:** YouthSpark Hub: www.microsoft.com/youthsparkhub

Build your **resume**.

Once you're ready, have someone review your resume for typos before sending it to employers.

- ❖ **Handout:** Resume tips and template

Practice your **interview**.

Practice speaking about your experiences and skills out loud. You will feel much more comfortable in the real one!

- ❖ **Handout:** Practice interview questions

Tip: Check back to your list of skills – are your key skills reflected in your resume and interview answers?



Careers in Technology: Creating your future with Computer Science

The world we interact with is full of advanced technology. Computer Science is the foundation for much of today's innovation, and many new jobs are being created for people with skills in this field. It involves creativity, problem-solving, programming, the Internet, data, and thinking about the impact of technology in communities. You can do so many things with Computer Science skills!

Look at how different careers use **Computer Science** or advanced technology skills. Making software is a big part of it, but there are lots more paths you can take using these skills.

❖ **Handout:** Careers using advanced tech skills

Which ones sound cool to you? Ask around, look online, find out more about them!

Dream it: Identify what you would do if you could **create** anything with technology. What problem would you solve?

How will you get there? For example, to build the first flying car, anybody would have to work up to it. Let's figure out the path you can take. Plan how to get the skills, knowledge, or experience you'll need.

Skills needed for your dream technology	How you will get those skills. Will you need certification? Practice? Formal education?
Example: Mechanical engineering education	

Keep coding!

Programming at every level takes experimentation and practice. Going back to the skills you wrote down that you need to work on, find and list at least 2 resources on this list that will help you improve.

❖ **Link:** YouthSpark Hub www.microsoft.com/youthsparkhub

Programs and training to try next: (look on www.microsoft.com/youthsparkhub!)

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**Tip: Are your coding skills reflected in your resume?*



Entrepreneurship: Create, build and grow a business

Beyond a great idea or solution, starting and being successful running your own business requires a core set of skills and knowledge. Through YouthSpark, we want to make sure you have access to the Microsoft technology and programs that can be most helpful to you in your future plans.

Pitch your **idea**.

Your idea or solution is the core of your business. In 2-3 sentences, describe what your business is all about and the problem it will solve.

Brainstorm your **business plan**.

At the core of any successful business is a strong plan that helps guide the work, short and long-term. The following questions start to form the details you need for a solid business plan. For any you are unsure about, set aside time to think through them or find a mentor to help you.

What problem are you trying to solve?

How will you solve the problem?

Who is your customer?

How will you make money?

What will it cost to get started?

How will you find customers?

**Tip: Look on www.microsoft.com/youthsparkhub for resources to help, like the NFTE Make Your Job step-by-step planning guide.*

Identify how your business uses **technology**.

Technology is required to help just about any business thrive – from tracking expenses, emailing and scheduling meetings, to customer interaction, presentations, and websites.

Technology Need	Potential Solution
Example: Outlook for email and scheduling customer appointments	Use Office 365, take a training on Outlook through Microsoft Office Training at www.microsoft.com/youthsparkhub