



# Tenacity 1.0

## A DCPS Employability Skills Curriculum

DCPS - Office of College and Career  
2015

## Table of Contents

### Unit 1 – Introduction: Poise, Initiative and Tenacity

For the Educator .....	4
Lesson 1 – An Introduction to Poise, Initiative, and Tenacity .....	5-10

### Unit 2 – Poise

Lesson 2 – First Impressions .....	12-14
Lesson 3 – Professional Dress.....	15-19
Lesson 4 – Positive Attitude .....	20-22
Lesson 5 – Code Switching .....	23-25
Lesson 6 – Public Speaking .....	26-28

### Unit 3 – Initiative

Lesson 7 – Organization .....	30-32
Lesson 8 – Time Management.....	33-39
Lesson 9 – Banking .....	40-44
Lesson 10 – Resume Writing .....	45-52
Lesson 11 – Cover Letters.....	53-55

### Unit 4 – Tenacity

Lesson 12 – Branding.....	57-61
Lesson 13 – Networking .....	62-67
Lesson 14 – Social Networking – “Netiquette” .....	68-69
Lesson 15 – Interviewing Skills .....	70-72

---

# **Unit 1 - Introduction: Poise, Initiative and Tenacity**

---

## Introduction: For the Educator

Tenacity centers on the development of three character strengths: poise, initiative and tenacity. The objective is to train students to adopt and apply these three character strengths to their own working habits. This overarching philosophy binds each discrete lesson into a coherent theme. While Tenacity teaches the acquisition of individual skills, it goes further to develop the habits and mindsets that will make students successful for the duration of their careers.

This curriculum's logic is that a students' adoption of the three character strengths will support their acquisition – and advancement – of any given professional skill. Yes, individual professional skills like resume writing, public speaking and professional dress are necessary, but they are not sufficient for success in life after high school. Fundamentally, the character strengths of poise, initiative, and tenacity speak to the manner in which one approaches challenges and the learning process. And the Tenacity approach will do more to empower students to learn and develop the necessary skills needed to advance their careers than any other approach that focuses on one standalone skill.

Too often, one's attention on goals and aspirations diverts one's focus away from the attitudes and mindsets required to fulfill those goals and aspirations. Goals are certainly an important piece, but goals should not supplant a disciplined focus on the processes that bring the goals to fruition. Furthermore, placing value in the process of the work itself, as opposed to the resulting rewards, leads one to have a more satisfactory work life. It leads one to develop an appetite for labor that is critical to a fulfilling career. This is what Tenacity aims to communicate to students.

Character strengths are more meaningful to students and teachers than any particular lesson about a professional skill. The argument that a student's ability to craft a resume is the make-or-break moment for their career is disingenuous. There is, however, much truth to the claim that the poise, initiative, and tenacity that students develop in the course of grappling with drafting a resume, or whatever professional skill they happen to be developing, will better equip them to pursue future professional positions.

The focus on character strengths is a philosophy that is applicable well beyond the bounds of professional life. It better equips students to engage the array of both personal and professional challenges they are bound to encounter.

Tenacity is about building strong men and women. Success is what follows.

---

## Lesson 1: Student Introduction

**Objective:** SWBAT demonstrate their understanding of the three key character traits (poise, initiative, and tenacity) by describing the professional value of the attributes and providing examples of behaviors that exhibit them.

**Key Takeaways:**

- The Tenacity curriculum centers on the development of three key character traits: poise, initiative and tenacity.

**Introduction:**

1. **Activity 1: Definitions** - As students enter the classroom, randomly hand each student an envelope with one of the key traits and its definition. Instruct students to independently read the definition of their trait. Have students write down an example of a time they, or someone they are familiar with, exhibited that trait. Have students share with the group. Explain to students that the employability skills they will learn in this curriculum will always relate back to these three character traits.

**Guided Practice:**

2. **Activity 2: In the Media, on the Big Screen** - Select several of the links in Activity 2 and play these clips, or portions of these clips, to the class. Have students identify how the individuals in the clips exhibit, or do not exhibit, poise, initiative and/or tenacity. *\*Optional guest speaker – Invite a guest speaker who can speak to the importance of these three traits through personal experience.*

**Independent Practice:**

3. Have students get into groups of three. Assign each group one of the three character traits and have each group develop two skits; one skit should be an accurate representation of the trait, and the other should be a poor representation of the trait. Have audience members identify the message being conveyed in each skit. Remind the class that respectful behavior should be used throughout.
4. **Activity 3: Self-Assessment** - Have students complete the **Employability Skills Self-Assessment** completely and honestly. Before students leave for the day, collect these assessments and place them in a secure envelope. These will be redistributed and revisited at the end of the last lesson or after completion of each student's internship.

**Check for Understanding:** Have students complete an exit ticket answering the questions: Which one of these traits do I need to work on the most this year? Why?

---

## L1: Activity 1 - Definitions

As students enter the classroom, randomly hand each student an envelope with one of the key traits and their definitions. Instruct students to independently read the definition of their word. Have students write down an example of a time they, or someone they are familiar with, exhibited this characteristic.

### **Poise:**

A dignified, self-confident manner or bearing; composure; self-possession. (A.k.a. – The art of keeping it together or not losing your cool)

---

### **Initiative:**

Readiness and ability in initiating action; Serving to set in motion. (A.k.a. – The ability to get things done without waiting for others to take action)

---

### **Tenacity:**

The quality of being tenacious, or of holding fast; persistence. (A.k.a – Relentlessly pursuing success, never giving up)

---

## L1: Activity 2 – In the Media, on the Big Screen

Below is a list of links to videos of professionals exhibiting, instilling, promoting, and/or championing the characteristics of poise, initiative, and tenacity. Play a select video clip and have students try to determine which character traits are or aren't being displayed.

**1. Initiative**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UZb2NOHPA2A>

The Pursuit of Happiness – Go for It scene

Which of the three qualities is the father trying to instill in his son?

**2. Initiative**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NIqOhxQ0-H8>

The story of Malala Yousafzai

How has Malala shown initiative in her life? How has she shown Tenacity?

**3. Poise**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WFHM0dljJpE>

Flight – Take off scene

What characteristics are the two characters showing?

**4. Poise**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pfAWJ3dMhrk>

Obama – Confronts Hecklers to avoid conflict

How does President Obama handle this situation?

**5. Tenacity**

[https://www.ted.com/talks/rita\\_pierson\\_every\\_kid\\_needs\\_a\\_champion?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/rita_pierson_every_kid_needs_a_champion?language=en)

Rita Pierson – Every kid needs a champion

How has Ms. Pierson shown tenacity in her career?

**6. Tenacity**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t2G8KVzTwfw>

Derek Redmond – Finishing what he started.

How did Derek show tenacity? How did his father show poise?

**7. Tenacity**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vUyXvvYBSqE>

Inky Johnson – Impose your will.

How would you describe Inky Johnson? How is he tenacious?

---

# L1: Activity 3 – Self-Assessment

## Employability Skills Assessment

Please complete this employability skills assessment honestly. This assessment will help you consider areas for growth. Your ability to improve will be considered more valuable than your baseline score when it comes to your consideration for internship placement.

Poise	1 = Below Standards/Expectations	2 = Meets Standards/Expectations	3= Exceeds Standards/Expectations
First Impression			
Professional Dress			
Attitude			
Professional Communication			
Public Speaking			
Initiative	1 = Below Standards/Expectations	2 = Meets Standards/Expectations	3= Exceeds Standards/Expectations
Organization			
Time Management			
Banking			
Resume Writing			
Tenacity	1 = Below Standards/Expectations	2 = Meets Standards/Expectations	3= Exceeds Standards/Expectations
Branding			
Networking			
Social Networking			
Interviewing Skills			



## Employability Skills Rubric Key

Poise	1 = Below Standards/Expectations	2 = Meets Standards/Expectations	3= Exceeds Standards/Expectations
<b>First Impression:</b> Makes a positive first impression when meeting people	I do not act respectfully towards others. I do not typically display professional or responsible behavior.	I am usually respectful towards others and display professional and responsible behavior. I sometimes lack confidence.	I use confident body language. I am always respectful towards others and always display professional and responsible behavior
<b>Professional Dress:</b> Understands how to dress professionally for a variety of occasions	I rarely dress appropriately for the occasion.	I usually am appropriately dressed for the occasion.	I am always appropriately dressed for the occasion.
<b>Attitude:</b> Is aware of how actions affect other people	I act with little concern for what others think. I am not always respectfully towards others. I tend to be a negative person.	For the most part I treat others respectfully by being polite. I usually consider how my actions affect others. I try to be positive.	I always treat others respectfully. I Use positive vocal or, facial expressions, and body language. I am a positive person and I project positivity
<b>Professional Communication:</b> Knows how to code switch and communicate professionally	I frequently use inappropriate language. I often display disrespectful behavior.	For the most part I communicate respectfully, using appropriate language. I am not always sure what language is appropriate in different scenarios.	I always communicate respectfully, using appropriate language suitable for the professional work environment. I have mastered the art of code switching.
<b>Public Speaking:</b> Is comfortable speaking in front of a large professional audience	I lack skill in public speaking. I often mumble, speak too low, and stumble over words. Public speaking makes me uncomfortable	For the most part I am comfortable speaking in front of large audiences, but I need to work on my delivery.	I always speak using appropriate language, volume, clarity and tone. I am very comfortable speaking in front of large groups.
Initiative	1 = Below Standards/Expectations	2 = Meets Standards/Expectations	3= Exceeds Standards/Expectations
<b>Organization:</b> Understands how keep oneself organized	I often do not come to class/work prepared. I have trouble finding things that I need. I lack basic organizational skills	For the most part I am prepared for class/work and I rarely have trouble finding things that I need. Organization isn't a problem for me.	I am always prepared for class/work, and I have exceptional skill when it comes to organizing things for myself and others. Other people would describe me as being organized.
<b>Time management:</b> On time. Rarely absent at school and at work	I am frequently absent and/or late to class or work. I have more than three unexcused absences at school/work this year.	I am almost always on time, but I am occasionally late. I am almost never absent from school/work.	I am always on time and I am never absent without a valid excuse. I can remember maybe one time I have been unexpectedly absent this year.
<b>Banking:</b> Has one or more bank accounts and understands basic banking concepts	I do not have a bank account and I do not understand much about banking, credit, or savings	I have a bank account and I know how to use it, but I am not sure that I understand basic banking skills.	I have a bank account(s) that I regularly use and I fully understand most basic banking skills and financial literacy skills regarding checking, savings and credit
<b>Resume Writing:</b> Has a well written professional resume	I do not have a professional resume	I have an up to date resume, but it contains errors and can be improved. Or, I have a resume but I'm not sure it is up to date.	My resume is perfect in all aspects including, grammar, formatting and descriptions of experiences and skills. I know where the most up to date version of my resume is.

## Tenacity 1.0 – A DCPS Employability Skills Curriculum

Tenacity	1 = Below Standards/Expectations	2 = Meets Standards/Expectations	3= Exceeds Standards/Expectations
<b>Branding:</b> Knows how to effectively brand oneself in a professional manner	I don't really think much about how others see me and I don't really care. I don't see the importance of what others think about me.	I understand how the way others see me can be important to my success in life, and I try to project my best self at all times.	I am very aware of how others see me and I have mastered the art of crafting my own personal brand so that I am always project my best self in the way that I want.
<b>Networking:</b> Knows how to network successfully in a professional setting	I tend to lack self-confidence and I do not like being social, particularly around strangers. I rarely introduce myself to new people	I have self-confidence and I enjoy being social, but I don't particularly go out of my way to meet new people unless there is some obvious reason that I should	I projects self-confidence and I Consistently seek out new contacts both personally and professionally. I go out of my way to introduce myself to new people all the time.
<b>Social Networking:</b> Utilizes social media in a professional capacity	I either have no social media presence or my social media presence is inappropriate for work.	I have a social media presence, but it is not particularly work focused in any way. I don't say/do crazy things online, but I also don't think much about it.	My social media presence is strong and very professional. I have multiple social media accounts that project my best professional self and I am active on these accounts.
<b>Interviewing Skills:</b> Knows how to interview and interviews well.	I have never practiced interviewing skills before and I do not feel confident interviewing. If I had a job interview next week, I wouldn't know how to act.	I have practiced basic interviewing skills such as handshakes, eye contact, frequently asked questions, etc. but I have multiple areas for improvement that I need to work on	I have practiced interviewing skills quite a bit and I am very confident going into job interviews. I have few areas to improve upon and I welcome the opportunity to interview