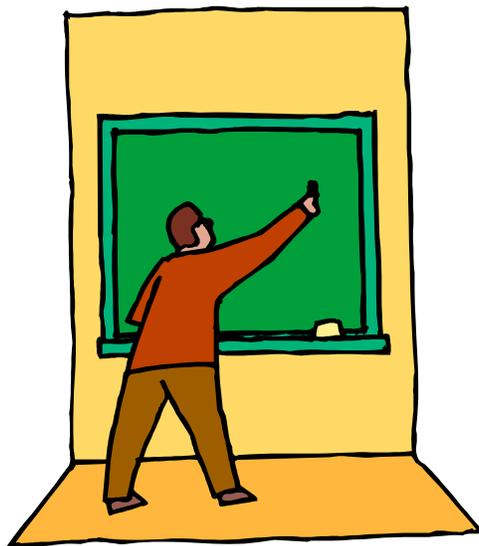


# Supported Job Search

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## Part A: Coach's Guide



# Publishing Information

## **Supported Job Search**

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## What is a Supported Job Search?

A Supported Job Search is a guided and supported approach to looking for work. It takes the principles of job clubs and applies them on an individual basis. This is not to say that working with individuals is better than working with groups. It's just necessary in some cases.

The Supported Job Search is not meant to replace other valuable services in your community. If your students lack a job goal, then you can help by referring them to an employment counsellor. If you are working with a person who is suffering from depression, perhaps he or she needs the help of a mental health counsellor.

The desired outcome of a Supported Job Search is to help people effectively search for work on a daily basis. If a student has access to a job finding club or another type of job search program, then by all means help her enrol in the program. If your community has agencies that can provide support through the whole job search process – and your students are willing to access these services – then the best way you can assist is to get them involved in these programs. Perhaps you can help to sustain the job searching once that program is over.

The theory behind job clubs and a Supported Job Search is the same: looking for work should not be done in isolation. The searcher requires support on many levels, including the following:

- taking a closer look at himself
- learning more about the positions she is applying for
- fine-tuning job search tools (resumes, applications, references, etc.)
- making and sticking to a job search plan
- communicating with employers and preparing for interviews
- keeping a winning attitude
- responding to job offers
- troubleshooting when the plan doesn't work
- finding new directions

Most seekers start with the right intentions, **but often not the right approach**. It is very common for job searchers to get stuck in a rut if they do not have quick results. A supported job search addresses these two vital stages of the process. First, we want seekers to start off with effective techniques. Second, we must be prepared to help students avoid the ever-present rut of despondency.

The reality of hopelessness cannot be overstated. It is not uncommon to work with students who have not been employed in over a year. You may even be working with people who haven't applied for a job in over a year. People in this situation require much more than a laser-printed resume and a pep talk. They need the guidance and support of a Supported Job Search.

## Who is it for?

The Supported Job Search is not for everyone. It is designed for people who have finished their academic program at a learning centre, and...

- have a realistic job goal
- are job search ready
- are prepared to help create their own job search documents
- are personally motivated
- have a positive attitude and can accept feedback
- can be assertive when contacting employers
- are willing to work with other agencies to fulfill the requirements of the supported job search
- have the literacy and basic skills necessary to be an effective job searcher

## The Coach's Role (Ideally)

You will be a job search coach. This involves helping students with understanding, enacting, assessing, and troubleshooting all aspects of the job search. You will provide the job searchers with a comprehensive action plan that includes the development of an effective routine, increases student accountability, and offers constructive feedback. Your learning centre can help immeasurably by making computers, faxes, phones, email, and the Internet available. You have the means to help your students compete on a level playing field. Your efforts can make an incredible difference.

**Ultimately, however, this is not about your efforts. The Supported Job Search recognizes that you are already very busy. This program expects the student to put in 90% of the effort. The 10% that you put in is meant to keep the student on track. Please remember that at all times. The most important outcome is to help students become effective, independent job searchers.**

# How does a Supported Job Search work?

Time frame: 6 - 9 weeks, meeting at least twice a week. Meetings will take approximately 30 minutes.

The best time to meet is at the beginning of the day so that students can carry on with the job search throughout the day. The reality is, however, that most coaches will not be available until the end of the day.

## Content

The following steps of the job search process are covered.

- Step 1        Self-assessment
- Step 2        Goal setting
- Step 3        Work preferences
- Step 4        Resumes
- Step 5        References
- Step 6        Cover letters
- Step 7        Application forms
- Step 8        Benefits statements
- Step 9        Portfolios / organization
- Step 10       Personal appearance
  
- Step 11       The Job Bank
- Step 12       Advertised positions
- Step 13       Networking
- Step 14       Employment agencies
- Step 15       Hidden job market
- Step 16       Contacting employers
- Step 17       Interviews
- Step 18       Job offers
- Step 19       Trouble shooting
- Step 20       Plan B

# Theory

This program will enhance students' efforts in three important ways.

- Support
- Accountability
- Feedback

The support you provide will increase the likelihood that students will attempt challenging tasks. The accountability imposed by the structure of the program and task deadlines will increase student motivation. Feedback will lead to continuous improvement, and also strengthen confidence and hope.

## Technique

The program consists of a series of actual job search activities. Each activity is broken into four parts.

1. Insight, background information, preparation
2. Completing a task
3. Feedback
4. Repeating the task (if necessary)

Here is an example of how the process works.

The student needs help planning a telephone call to an employment agency to see if they have any jobs. The steps would work like this:

1. Help the student write a script and role-play the call.
2. Negotiate a deadline for making the call and check for compliance.
3. Discuss how the phone call went and suggest ways of improvement.
4. Negotiate deadlines for subsequent calls.

## A Note About Tasks

Since this is a supported program, the students are not meant to do the tasks completely on their own. Ultimately, there are aspects of most tasks that they will have to do independently, but your guidance is necessary for improving their skills.

Students are asked to meet with you before attempting any task. Please read forward in the manual so that you are always ready to properly assist students.



To promote a sense of accountability, it is recommended that you negotiate deadlines for each task. This will also help students by giving them the sense that it really does make a difference whether they get resumes out on a given day or not. Even if they don't get a response from an employer, the completion of the task still matters in the context of their commitment to the Supported Job Search.

## Evaluation

It is vitally important that students meet with you before and after any employer or employment agency contact. This includes cold calls, submitting applications, and interviews.

A evaluation sheet (called a Stop, Start, and Continue) is included at the end of the coach's guide. Please use it to debrief students after all of the contacts noted above, and any tasks you deem especially challenging.

## Program Preparation

We do ask that you promote the program. The Supported Job Search is a relatively new concept so you will need to help get the word out.

## Finding Candidates

An effective way to find candidates is to have some job search discussions with your regular students. Structure the conversations so that **you** can learn as much about students' knowledge and attitudes regarding job searching. Try to focus in on areas that they find most difficult. Encourage an environment of openness, and listen and probe further to uncover the underlying problems. Don't try to provide answers. The students have heard them all before. This is not the right setting to challenge their viewpoints. Treat the session more like a focus group than a workshop. Ask the following open-ended questions.

- Why is job searching so difficult?
- What is the hardest part of job searching?
- How do you stay motivated?
- What kind of negative experiences have you had when job searching?
- What would you say to encourage someone who had been out of work for more than a year?
- What kind of assistance do you need when looking for work?

After the discussions, promote your supported job search program. Tell the students that you have a new approach that addresses their individual needs. Your system doesn't offer the answers they've all heard before. It offers

personalized guidance and support in flexible ways that can accommodate any schedule. See who will register for an introductory meeting to learn more about the program.

You may need to approach students individually to promote the Supported Job Search. Comments made by students during class discussions will help you to identify who needs more support with their job search.

Provide them with the information sheet on the following page so that they are prepared for the first meeting with you.

If students do not have a resume, give them a copy of the resume writing form at the end of this guide to complete before their first appointment.



# Student Information Sheet

## Supported Job Search

Job searching can be very difficult to do alone. Sometimes it is downright depressing. A Supported Job Search gives you the support you need to stay positive. A **Job Search Coach** will help you work through all of the steps required to find a job.

This program is for people who:

- have a realistic job goal
- are ready to look for work
- can commit to attending regular appointments
- can complete tasks according to weekly deadlines
- have a positive attitude and can accept feedback

If you would like to know more about the Supported Job Search, please make an appointment with your coach.

If you have any of the following items, please bring them to your appointment.

- resume (on computer disk if possible)
- a sample of the cover letter that you use
- references
- diplomas, certificates, and licences

### **Important note:**

If you do not have a resume, ask your coach for a blank resume form. Fill it in and bring it to your appointment.

# The First Meeting

## Explaining the Program

**Start by asking students to read pages 1-5 in Part B of the manual.**

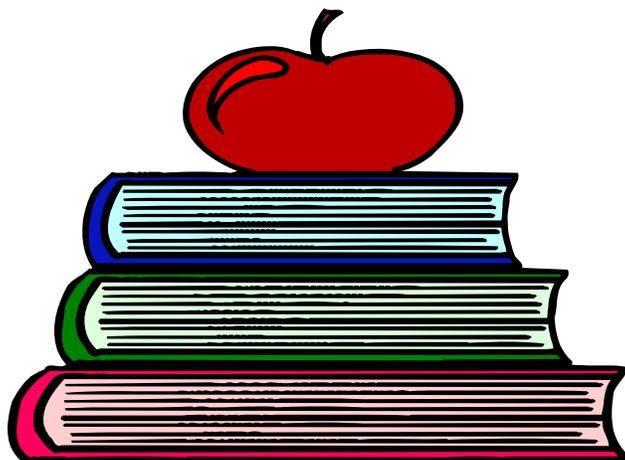
Tell the students that you will guide and support them through the entire job search process. It is best if you can offer to meet with them at least twice a week. You will work together to devise the best plan, develop professional marketing tools, build the most effective job search routine, and maintain a positive attitude.

The best way to explain what they will be working on is to go through the assessment process.

## Assessment

Assessment is a tricky business because people will be entering the program with different skills. To avoid teaching people what they already know, it is best to focus on the skill gaps that they identify.

Work with students to complete the assessment sheet on the following page. Be clear that we are seeking excellence in each category. Average competence is not enough when looking for work.



## Assessment Form – Part 1

Task	Yes	No	Pages
Do you have a clear and realistic job goal?			9 – 10
Do you know all the Essential Skills required for your job goal?			10 – 11
Have you considered all of your work preferences? (hours, wages, location, etc.)			12 – 14
Is your resume up to date?			15
Is your resume saved on disk?			16
Do you have a typed reference sheet?			17 – 19
Is your reference sheet saved on disk?			20
Do you have a typed cover letter?			21 – 23
Is your cover letter saved on disk?			23
Have you completed a practice application form?			24 – 38
Have you prepared a benefits statement?			39 – 40
Do you have a portfolio containing all of your diplomas, certificates, licences, memberships, etc?			41
Do you have any questions or concerns about how you should appear when looking for work?			42 – 43
Do you know how to use the Job Bank?			44
Do you know how to use the online version of the Job Bank?			45 – 46
Do you know where to find free copies of newspapers and journals?			47 – 48
Do you know how to network – ask people for information about job leads and employers?			49 – 50
Have you asked <u>all</u> your local government funded employment agencies to help you?			51 – 54
Have you registered with all of your local private employment agencies? (Drake, Kelly, etc.)			55 – 57
Do you know how to apply for advertised jobs?			58
Do you know how to respond to “help wanted signs” in windows?			59 – 60
Do you know the 5 main ways of finding unadvertised jobs?			61
Are you aware of the 4 main ways of contacting employers?			62

## Assessment Form – Part 2

Task	Yes	No	Pages
Do you know how to prepare for contact with employers?			63
Are you confident about talking to employers in person?			64 – 65
Are you confident about talking to employers on the telephone?			66 – 69
Are you planning to contact employers by mail?			70
Do you know how to fax a job application?			71
Do you use a fax transmission sheet when sending faxes?			72
Do you know how to email a job application?			73
Are you confident about making follow-up calls to employers?			74
Do you know all of the steps to planning a job search?			75 – 76
Do you have a form for recording weekly job searching goals?			77 – 78
Do you have a form for recording employer leads?			79
Do you have a form for recording employer contacts?			80
Do you have a form for recording weekly tasks?			81
Do you know the 3 things employers are looking for in a job interview?			82 – 88
Are you aware of the 15 main mistakes that people make in an interview?			89
Do you have interview-planning forms?			90 – 93
Do you know what questions to ask when receiving a job offer?			94 – 96
Do you know how to fix your job search if it is not working?			97
Do you know how to come up with a new plan if you can't find a job?			98 – 99

## Getting Started

Give students a copy of the completed assessment form so that you both share the same understanding of what you are going to work on if they decide to join the program.

Now that they know more about the program, ask if they would like to enrol.

If so, show them the contract on the following page and ask them to sign it. Accountability is a major part of this program. Negotiate when you and the student will have your meetings. Agree upon an end date and be clear that the program does not guarantee the outcome of finding a job. It will, however, help students develop the skills necessary to continue their job search independently.

## Programming

**Ask students to review the program expectations from pages 1 – 5 in Part B of the manual. Ensure that all students read the “Welcome Aboard” section on pages 6 – 8 in Part B of the manual.**

**After that, you will work from the assessment sheet. Cover the pages in the student portion of the manual that students identified as areas for improvement – questions that they responded “no” to.**

It is suggested that you use at least two meetings to tackle each topic on the assessment sheet. The first meeting is for covering the topic and planning the task. The second meeting is for the evaluation, reflecting on the task. Some tasks will require more time, and other tasks are ongoing. The schedule will vary according to the student; just make sure that the process of planning and evaluation is built into every task.

## Finishing

With any luck, students will find employment within the 6 – 9 week timeframe. If they don't, it is by no means unusual. The hope is that the Supported Job Search will have given them the skills necessary to job search independently.

If you don't feel that the student can succeed on their own, the final section of the manual, Plan B, provides some other suggestions on what students should do next.

# Supported Job Search Contract

## Student Responsibilities

- To have a clear and realistic job goal
- To attend all appointments
- To work with outside agencies
- To make job search documents
- To work with a coach to improve communication skills
- To complete the assigned job search tasks, such as building a network
- To evaluate and improve on all assigned tasks
- To find leads and contact employers
- To participate in role-playing, videotaping
- To apply for jobs
- To analyze and fine-tune the process
- To keep the job search coach up to date on all activities
- To openly discuss problems

## Contract

I, \_\_\_\_\_, would like to sign up for the Supported Job Search. I agree to attend all appointments with my coach and complete all tasks within given deadlines.

Meetings will be held at these times:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Start date: \_\_\_\_\_

End date: \_\_\_\_\_

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# Stop, Start, Continue Evaluation Form

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## Stop

Now that I have completed this task for the first time, I would improve it next time by not doing this again:

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## Start

Now that I have completed this task for the first time, I would improve it next time by starting to:

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## Continue

Now that I have completed this task for the first time, I would do the following just the same way because it worked so well:

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## Resume Fact Sheet

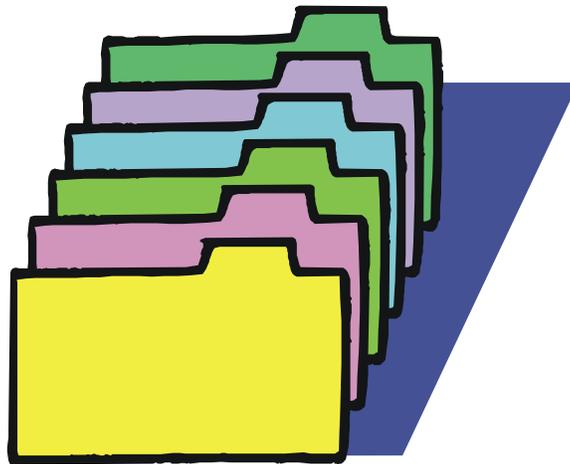
It can be hard to figure out just what you should include in your resume. It depends on your work experience and the kind of job you are looking for.

**To begin your resume, fill out the resume fact sheets on the following pages.**

Pay attention to details like dates and your job duties. There may not be enough space on the following sheets to include all your life experience.

If you need more room, fill in the details on photocopies of these sheets or even on a blank sheet of paper. Do not leave out important points just because there is not enough room.

Take the completed sheets to your local learning centre, Ontario Works office or employment agency. Ask them for help making a resume on a computer. Put your best effort into making a resume. It is often your first chance to impress employers.



# Resume Fact Sheet

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Postal Code:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Phone Number #2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Tip:** if you do not have a phone, use the number of a reliable person with an answering machine who will take messages for you. Also, you should list a second number if you do not have an answering machine.

## Job Goal (objective)

**Tip:** it is a good idea to mention a job goal if you are looking for one type of job. Employers like people with goals. Even if you use a job goal, you should have a copy of your resume made without the goal on it. That way you can still apply for any position that comes up. You can also change the goal to match the advertised job. Make sure you use the same language that is used in the ad. For example, if the employer calls clerks 'retail associates', then say that your goal is to become a retail associate.

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# Resume Fact Sheet

## Education

**Tip:** your education should include the grade levels you completed, the schools you attended, and your final year at each school.

School / Address	Grade Completed	Year Completed	Special Courses
<b>Example:</b> Queen Elizabeth High School, Trenton, ON	Grade 10	1992	Auto shop Welding Drafting

## Skills

**Tip:** mention the things that you have done really well on the job. Some examples are working with the public, running a chain saw, or using a computer. Don't sell yourself short. Most people are not aware of all the skills they have.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

# Resume Fact Sheet

## Personal Qualities

**Tip:** personal qualities are the way you do things and your attitude towards work. For example, do you work well with people or prefer to be alone.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

## Work Experience

**Tip:** for most people, this is the main section of the resume. It is very important to describe your experience in a way that catches the employer's interest.

Include your job titles, employers, and locations. Mention any job placements or co-op positions you have had in this section. Dates of employment are also very important.

List your duties and the skills you used on each job. Start with your last job and work backwards. Use a spare sheet of paper if you need it to cover all your experience.



# Resume Fact Sheet

## Work Experience

**Tip:** start with your last job. Work your way backwards until you reach your first job.

**Fill in the information for your last job here.**

**Job title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Company:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City / Town:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dates of employment** (if you worked somewhere for less than two years you should note the months you started and finished)

Year started:                      Month started:

Year ended:                        Month ended:

### Duties:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

# Resume Fact Sheet

## Work Experience

Fill in the information for your 2nd last job here.

**Job title:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Company:** \_\_\_\_\_

**City / Town:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dates of employment** (if you worked somewhere for less than two years, you should note the months you started and finished)

Year started:                      Month started:

Year ended:                        Month ended:

### Duties:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

# Resume Fact Sheet

## Volunteer Work

**Tip:** volunteer work is almost as important to employers as paid work. It shows that you are a motivated person who enjoys new challenges.

**Who did you volunteer for?**

\_\_\_\_\_

**City / Town:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Dates:**            Year started:            Year ended:

**What did you do for them?**

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Certificates & Licences

**Tip:** note your certificates and licences. Include the date you achieved them to show that they are up to date. Don't forget to mention a driver's licence, if you have one.

Name of certificate / licence	Where did you get it / where are they located?	Year you received it

# Resume Fact Sheet

## Training

**Tip:** training includes government programs and courses taken while working or volunteering. For example, some employers train their people about dangerous materials at work. It's called WHMIS training. Other people have received government training through programs like Ontario Works.

**Name of company or training agency:**

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**City / Town:** \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Dates:</b>	Year started:	Month started:
	Year ended:	Month ended:

**What were you trained to do?**

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

## Achievements and Awards

**Tip:** mention any activities that have made you proud. Employers like people who take pride in what they do. If you have ever received an award for something, you should also mention it here. Include where and when you received the award. You need to stand out from the crowd to attract employers' attention.

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# Resume Fact Sheet

## Machine Operation

**Tip:** telling employers what machines you already know how to use could make you look like the best person for the job. List the machines you can operate (examples: saws, drills, power tools, sewing machines).

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## Hobbies and Interests

**Tip:** hobbies and interests are a good way to show that you have a positive attitude toward life. You should mention things that make you appear healthy, happy and interested in life. Interests related to the job you want are even better.

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## Other

**Tip:** there may be other things in your life that would interest employers. Do you feel you included everything that would make you a good employee on the Resume Fact Sheets? If not, list your other good points here. Maybe they can be included in your resume.

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