

Supported Job Search

Part B: Student Manual





Supported Job Search

Essential
SKILLS • TRAINING

Supported Job Search is a 6-9 week program of approximately 30 minutes per day, designed to prepare students for employment success.

Topics covered include:

1. [Self-assessment, Goal Setting & Work Preferences](#)
2. [Resumes, References & Cover Letters](#)
3. [Application Forms & Benefit Statements](#)
4. [Portfolios & Organization](#)
5. [Personal Appearance](#)
6. [The Job Bank, Advertised Positions & Networking](#)
7. [Employment Agencies](#)
8. [Hidden Job Market](#)
9. [Contacting Employers](#)
10. [Interviews & Job Offers](#)
11. [Troubleshooting](#)

Why should I try the Supported Job Search?

Looking for work is a challenge. There are many ups and downs. You have probably felt upset at times. Everyone does. People often feel that they have tried it all before, that there is nothing new to learn. Part of that feeling is true. There isn't a lot of new advice about looking for work. The old ways of looking for work are tried and true. They work most of the time. If they don't work, the key is to find a way to add to your skills and experiences. That way you have something new to offer. You have just done that by improving your education.

Congratulations for having the courage to try something different and the ability to complete the task.

You are now in a stronger position to look for work. Don't be concerned about how hard it was in the past. You are not the same person as you were before. Give the **new you** a chance. In order to find a job, you must give it your all. Actually, give it more than your all. Get some help. Job searching should not be done alone. Get the eyes and ears of everyone you know working for you.

This Supported Job Search is made to give you the help you need. This program will guide you through the complete job search process. That's what makes this approach different. You will not just be learning about how to find a job. You will actually be searching for a job as you learn. You also get the bonus of your own job search coach.

The great thing about this program is that you don't get a certificate when it's done – the hope is that you will get a job. At the very least you will have improved your job search skills. People who have a job search plan and stick to it have a much higher success rate than those who rely on luck. As they say in football, “you make your own luck.” In other words, good things happen to people who put in the extra effort.

If you decide to take this program, you will...

- improve your speaking and writing skills
- raise your self-confidence

and

- greatly increase your chances of finding the right job.

How does a Supported Job Search work?

The program guides you through the entire job search process. You will work with your coach to:

- define your goal
- perfect your resume, cover letter, benefits statement, etc.
- find job leads
- apply for jobs
- prepare for interviews
- discuss job offers

You will start with the easier job search tasks and, as your skills and confidence grow, work your way up towards the more difficult tasks.

Each topic has learning activities that you will work on with your coach until you are confident enough to do it on your own. Each activity is split into four steps.

1. Background information and preparation
2. Completing the task before the deadline
3. Feedback – comments from coach
4. Repeating the task (if necessary) before the deadline

For example, if you are planning to telephone an employment agency to see if they have any jobs, the steps would work like this:

1. Plan your conversation and write a script.
2. Agree to a deadline with your coach and call the agency.
3. Tell your coach how the telephone call went and discuss ways of improving your skills the next time.
4. Agree to a deadline with your coach and call another agency.

By following these steps you will always be improving your skills. You will become an **effective** job searcher with a higher chance of success.

None of the activities are created just to help you learn. **You will learn as you apply for real jobs.** You have recently completed a valuable training program.

You are ready to look for work!

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

How long does it take?

On average, the Supported Job Search will last 6 – 9 weeks.

Two weekly meetings with the coach are required. Meetings will last about 30 minutes.

1 st meeting:	planning job search tasks
2 nd meeting:	reviewing tasks and discussing improvements

Important Note

No one can promise you that you will find a job before the program ends. The goal of the program is to provide you with the skills to independently look for work.

If you are not ready to work independently when the program is complete, your coach will help you make connections with other people who can assist you.

The Coach's Role

You will work through the entire process with a coach, who will be your personal job search coach. The coach will help you with all of the tasks in this manual. He or she will also assist you with the use of computers, faxes, email, and the Internet. You will have all the benefits of modern technology while in the program.

Your coach will help you do everything necessary to effectively apply for jobs. He or she will also help you solve problems, meet deadlines, stay motivated, and fine-tune your job search.

Your coach is there to guide and support you through the job search process. He or she will help you with all of your tasks, but your coach will not actually do the tasks for you. For example, your coach will help you edit your cover letter, but you will be expected to write it and type it.

Job Searcher's Role

As a general rule, the coach will do 10% of the work and the **job searchers will complete the other 90%**.

In order for the program to work, job searchers will need to:

- attend regular meetings
- work closely with their coach
- complete all tasks
- meet all deadlines
- constantly improve their skills

The Supported Job Search is a complete program. No part of it can be removed. All of the tasks are there for a reason – to help you find a job.

The coach has to put aside valuable time to help job searchers. It is only fair to ask the searchers to make a commitment in return. The following page is a learning contract. Please read it closely. If you decide to join the program, you will be asked to sign the contract.

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: _____

Welcome Aboard

Congratulations for deciding to join the Supported Job Search. You have just taken an important step towards finding the job that is right for you.

By now, you should have **completed an assessment** with your coach. This will be used to determine your overall plan.

You should also have signed a **learning contract** with your coach that outlines your responsibilities, meeting times, and when the program ends.

If these matters have not been taken care of, talk to your coach about completing them before you go any further in this manual.

Working With Your Coach

Make sure you attend all your appointments with your coach. You should aim for two meetings a week. One is for planning, and the other is for reviewing and improving your efforts. Ask your coach if it is all right for you to contact him or her in-between appointments if you have to meet a job application deadline.

Be completely open with your coach about the areas of job searching you find difficult, or even downright scary. Most tasks in life are easier when done with other people.

It is important that you contact your coach before making any contact with an employer or employment agency. This is the most vital time for you to work together. There is no point in contacting people until you are completely prepared to do so.

A Note About Tasks

The tasks in this manual are actual job search activities. You are not meant to do the tasks on your own. Please discuss all tasks with your coach before and after completing them. **Some tasks will require that you meet a negotiated deadline.** It is important that you perfect all of the skills necessary to complete each task. These are the skills that are needed to find work. Because of this your coach will ask you to repeat the tasks until you get them right.

The Master Plan

For most people the Supported Job Search will include the following topics:

- defining your goal
- getting ready - resume, cover letter, portfolio, benefits statement, etc.
- finding job leads
- applying for jobs
- preparing for interviews
- discussing job offers

Your plan depends on the assessment you completed. Ask your coach for a copy of it. It will be your road map through this program.

It is very important that you stick to the schedule that you have agreed to with your coach. Do not work ahead.

In terms of effort, a Supported Job Search requires more work than a common job search. But it is worth the effort because the program also develops your communication skills and, better yet, **it has a greater chance of success.**

The chart shows the differences.

Common Job Search Tasks	Supported Job Search Tasks
Checking Job Bank Faxing resumes Applying for advertised positions Applying for positions whenever you hear about them Responding to whatever happens	Everything on the left hand side And Researching employers Accessing the hidden job market Contacting employers Setting daily goals Using modern technology Using all available resources Networking Making things happen

Sure it's harder but, believe it or not, that is a good thing. Fewer people will take on the difficult tasks. You can separate yourself from the pack by using job search strategies that most people shy away from.

Job searching is all about getting the attention of the person who has the power to hire you. If you complete all parts of the Supported Job Search, you will be noticed. Sounds like a lot of work, doesn't it? It is, but you won't be alone. You will have the support of a job search coach.



Goal Setting

It all starts with a clear and realistic goal. How can you get what you want if you don't know what you want?

The Supported Job Search is based on helping you have an effective job search plan. A plan without a goal is not effective. Your efforts must be focused in order to work.

Some people apply for certain jobs to satisfy another person or agency. This is not effective either. **It also has to be your goal.** You have to be motivated in order to find a job. You will be competing against other people who are hungry for the same job. If you don't really care whether or not you get the job, you will always lose the battle against someone who does care.

You need to be very specific about your goal. The goal is the foundation of the entire job search. Without a definite and clear goal, the rest of the process will fall apart. For example, say you are looking for a job at a construction site, but your resume was made back when you were looking for a job at a restaurant. Since your resume doesn't highlight your construction skills, it will not help you to get the job you really want.

People are often too general when looking for work. They feel that leaves them available for any position. It leaves all the doors open. It sounds like a good idea, doesn't it?

Actually, it's not a good idea. You need to sell yourself. It is your job to identify your skills and to find the position that you are most suited for. You want to present yourself to the employer as a problem-solver. If you are leaving it up to the employer to decide what job you are good for, you are just adding to their headaches.

The problem isn't really fixed by saying that you want a job in a field, such as construction or retail. These fields have hundreds of different types of positions. There's a big difference between being a *cashier* and a *warehouse worker* for a big retail store.

Be specific!

Goal Setting

Task #1

Ask your coach to help you go to the National Occupational Classification (NOC) website. Find the positions that relate to the field that you are interested in. There is usually more of a selection than people are aware of.

Website: <http://www23.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/2001/e/groups/index.shtml>

Use this information to be very specific about your goal. Employers do not have the time to help you figure out what kind of job you are looking for. That is your responsibility.

My goal is _____

Essential Skills

It is important that you have the skills required for your job goal. The Essential Skills website run by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada will give you the information you need to know.

Task # 2

Ask your coach to help you go to the Essential Skills website. Find the skills necessary for your goal.

Website: www15.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/English/general/home_e.asp

Print out the result and evaluate how qualified you are for the job. If you possess all of the skills, keep moving towards your goal. Memorize or make notes of the skills and be sure to discuss them when communicating with employers.

If you are missing some of the skills, find a way to fill these gaps in the near future. Talk to your coach about whether you can still look for work in your chosen field or if you need to fill the skill gaps first.

If you lack several of the skills necessary to reach your job goal, you should not start your job search at this time. You still have some good options. First, now that you know what skills are required to reach your goal, you can work with your coach to make a plan to learn the skills. Second, you can go back to Task #1 and change your goal. Perhaps you can work at an entry level job in the same field. For example, someone who isn't ready to be a *carpenter's assistant* could start as a *general labourer* in construction. The experience and personal connections that he or she makes as a *general labourer* could pave the way to becoming a *carpenter's assistant* at a later date.



Work Preferences

Picking a position, say a *cashier* or an *office clerk*, is a step in the right direction. But there is still some narrowing down to do. What hours are you prepared to work? What wage are you willing to accept? How far are you willing to travel? Are you hoping for a dental plan? Your work preferences need to be sorted out at the beginning of your job search.

You are not looking for just any job. You want the right job.

You can use your preferences to sell yourself to employers, too. For example, if you enjoy working with people, you would be sure to tell that to employers who are hiring somebody to deal with the public.

The next activity will help you know your work preferences. Use them well. They could just land you that job you have been dreaming of.



Task #3 Check all the boxes that apply to you.

Work Preference	Yes	Does not matter	No
To earn enough money to live well			
To feel important in my job			
To have a full-time job			
To be allowed to work on my own			
To use all my skills			
To work with a good team			
To have a good benefits package			
To do something different each day			
To use my mind			
To avoid physical labour			
To have a chance at promotions / raises			
To make decisions about my job			
To have time free for my family			
To know what I'm expected to do			
To avoid a job with travel			
To have an interesting job			
To be respected by workmates			
To learn new skills			
To work near home			
To work indoors			
To have new challenges			
To work regular 9:00 – 5:00 hours			
To work with things			
To work with people			

Are there any other preferences that you would like to add to the list?

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____

The reality is that you won't find a job that suits all of your preferences. Compromises always have to be made. Focus on what is most important to you.

Task #4

Use the checklist to choose the five most important things to you.

- 1. _____
- 2. _____
- 3. _____
- 4. _____
- 5. _____

Using your goal and the priorities you listed write a paragraph that describes your perfect job. Use at least five complete sentences.

The Resume

A resume is a brief written description of who you are and what you have done. It is very difficult to find a job today without a resume. In fact, some employers won't let you apply for a job if you don't have one.

Resumes take a lot of effort. It is best to prepare one before you start looking for work. That way you are ready when someone asks to see your resume.

Preparing or updating your resume now will save you time and stress later on. Often, you can leave a resume with an employer instead of filling out applications over and over again.

Resumes should contain the following information.

<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Your contact information• Education and training• Work history• Volunteer work	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skills• Personal qualities• Interests and hobbies• Licences, certificates and awards
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Task #5

Select tasks according to what stage you are at now.

1. If you do not have a resume, ask your coach for resume-writing form. Complete the form.
2. If your resume is missing some of the information listed above, ask your coach for those pages from the resume-writing form. Complete the pages.
3. When you have a complete resume, meet with your coach to have it assessed.
4. Make final changes to resume.

Saving Your Resume on Disk

Your coach needs a copy of your resume on disk. Resumes need to be changed all the time. You might earn a new certificate or have a change of address. If your coach has the resume on disk, it can be changed within minutes. If not, the entire resume has to be rewritten. Nobody has that kind of time to spare.

Also, if the resume is on disk new copies can be made at any time.

Another bonus is that resumes from a printer look better than photocopies.

Task #6

Arrange to have a copy of your resume saved on a computer disk. Print it out. Safely store several copies of your resume in your portfolio.



References

References are people who can either put in a good word for you or back up what you say on your resume. This can be done over the telephone or through a letter of recommendation. Without references, employers have no way of telling if what you are saying is true.

You can improve your chances of being hired by picking at least three good references. You do not have to use just the people you have worked for. Here is a list of ideas:

- former employers
- teachers / tutors
- supervisors / workmates
- government workers
- volunteer work contacts
- doctors, lawyers, and politicians
- happy customers
- bank managers, landlords
- store owners / managers

Help Your References

1. Ask if you can use them as a reference. Ask for phone number(s) where they can be contacted.
2. Give your references a copy of your resume and even a list of your good qualities.
3. Give your references a call if you know for certain that an employer is going to contact them. Tell them what the work duties are and why you are the right person for the job.
4. Thank your references whenever they help you out, whether or not you get the job.
5. Stay in touch with your references. Give them new copies of your resume whenever you change it. They are important contacts.

References Sheet

When employers ask for your references they expect accurate information on them. This includes correctly spelled names, job titles, places of work and current phone numbers. Most employers ask for references at the job interview, but some want them ahead of time. Application forms often ask for references. It is best to be prepared by always having copies of your reference sheet with you.

Task #7

Call your references and update their information and send them an updated copy of your resume. This is good practice for your communications and networking skills. While you are talking, ask if they know of any jobs.

If you are uncomfortable making the call, speak to your coach about writing a script. If the first call didn't go well, talk to your coach before making the next call.

Fill in the following reference fact sheet. Like resumes, reference sheets should be typed before being given to employers.

Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Workplace / Location: _____

Phone Numbers: _____ Fax _____

Email: _____

Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Workplace / Location: _____

Phone Numbers: _____ Fax _____

Email: _____

References Sheet

Name: _____

Job Title: _____

Workplace / Location: _____

Phone Numbers: _____ Fax _____

Email: _____



Saving Your Reference Sheet on Disk

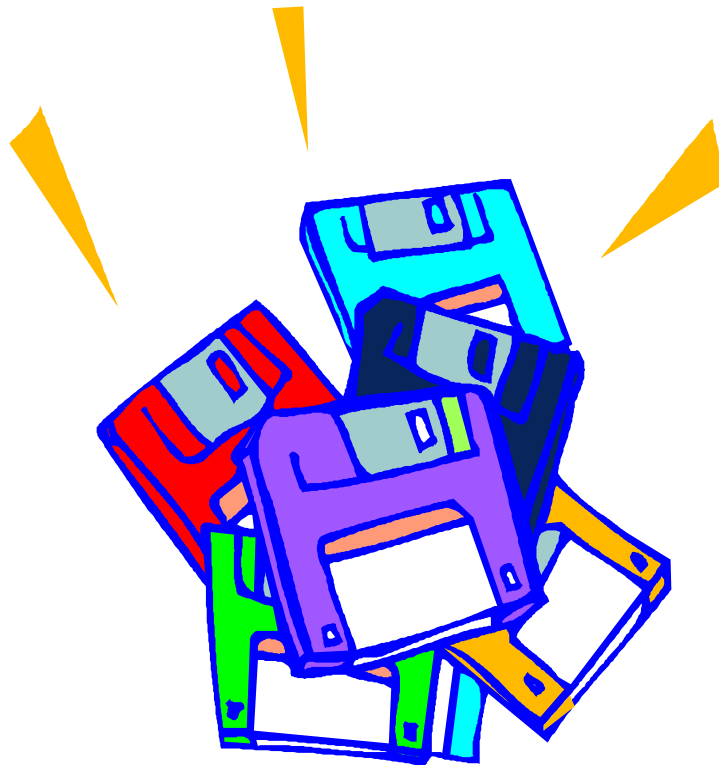
The need for references could pop up at any time. An advertised position could ask you to attach references to your application. You also need to take references with you to all interviews and appointments with employment agencies.

The last thing you need is to be rushing around at the last minute calling references and typing out their information.

Get it done now. It will lower your stress levels and could make the difference in finding the right job.

Task #8

Work with your coach to save your reference sheet on a computer disk.



Writing Your Cover Letter

Cover Letters

It has been proven over and over that a cover letter greatly improves your chances of getting an interview.

Many people overlook this opportunity to increase their odds of success. Instead they submit resumes without even referring to the position. Even worse, they will fax resumes to a large organization without addressing it to the person responsible for hiring.

No wonder they aren't getting interviews. Nobody knows what job the application is for or even who should receive the resume.

What to Say When Writing to Employers

When you send your resume in the mail you need to attach a cover letter.

A cover letter is a letter you write to an employer to send with your resume.

- in response to a help wanted ad OR
- to ask about openings at a company

Why Use a Cover Letter?

1. It directs your resume to the person who has the power to hire you.
2. It tells the employer what job openings you are interested in.
3. It highlights your experiences and the employer will want to read your resume.
4. It tells the employer that you would like to meet with them for an interview.
5. It gives you a chance to make a personal connection with the employer.

Writing Your Cover Letter

The following is a sample letter that would be sent for an unadvertised position. This letter includes an employer that Lisa has found in a business directory. Her letter could be used for any company that hires *tool and die workers* changing the date and the company name and address. The bolded areas are what need to be changed. As you will see later in this manual, the letter would be slightly different for an advertised job.

LISA MONROE

83 Barrie Street, Kingston, ON K7L 3LA

(613) 555-1000

August 26, 2004

**Rachael Wilson, Manager
Kingston Tool and Die
47 Brock Street
Kingston, ON K7L 3G6**

Dear Ms. Wilson:

I am interested in obtaining a position with **Kingston Tool and Die**. Enclosed please find my resume for your review.

As my resume shows, I have two years experience in machine operation and assembling products for shipping. I am also an energetic, responsible, and hard-working individual.

I am confident that these are qualities which you expect and appreciate in your employees, and that my experience and abilities will make me a valuable addition to **Kingston Tool and Die**.

Please feel free to contact me at the telephone number listed above to schedule an interview at your convenience. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future. Thank you for your consideration of my resume.

Sincerely,

Lisa Monroe

Writing Your Cover Letter

Task #9

Write a rough draft of a general cover letter and discuss it with your coach. Make the necessary changes and type it out on a computer.

Do you have your general cover letter on computer disk? If so, have you given it to your coach?

Once the letter is saved, it can be quickly changed for any position. Getting it ready now will save you time and stress later.

In fact, preparation could make the difference between applying for that dream job and missing the deadline.

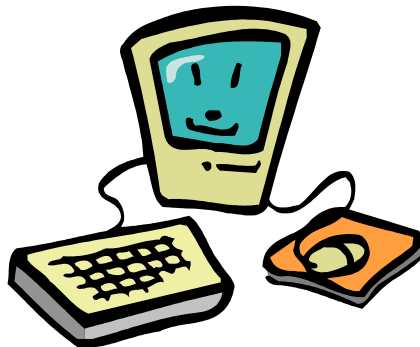
Saving Your Cover Letter on Disk

Task #10

Save your covering letter to disk and name it “general covering letter.” Make sure your coach gets a copy.

Work with your coach to get the contact name and address for another employer. Any employer will do. This is just a practice exercise. Open your general covering letter and change it so that it looks like you are applying to the new employer.

Once you are done, click on File and then Save As. Give the file a new name. This will keep your first letter in its original form.



Application Forms

Many people are frustrated by the need to complete an application form. They feel that the employer should just look at their resume. This frustration often leads to a badly completed form.

This is a big mistake.

Employers have several good reasons for using application forms. It is in your best interest to be more careful when completing the form.

First, employers use forms so that they have the same information about all applicants. Resumes often leave out information that is important to employers.

For example, nobody says that they have a criminal record on their resume. Most application forms ask about this issue. While we are on that topic, the legally accepted question on applications is “do you have a criminal record for which you have not received a pardon?” There will more on this topic later in the manual.

Second, employers want to see what the applicant’s written skills are like. They know that resumes are often written by professionals. Employers use the application to learn more about the applicant’s ability to communicate.

Third, people have to sign an application form. They are testifying to the accuracy of the information. People can say anything on a resume. A signed application form has a little more legal clout to it. Sometimes employers fire people for lying on their application. They use applications to protect themselves legally.



Application Forms

After resumes, application forms are the main way to apply for work. Often, the application form is the employer's first impression of you. Every word and every little detail can make a difference in whether you will be called in for an interview.

Once again, the key to success at this stage of the job search is preparation. Planning your answers to questions on the application form could get you that job!

Filling out a “Winning” Application Form

Take your practice application form, resume, reference sheet, and ID with you when you apply for work. Copy this information onto your new application forms.

Do not fill out applications in a rush. Take them home first if you need more time.

Provide a detailed description of your skills and experience.

Include all details, such as dates, addresses, and phone numbers.

Fill out every section of the form.

Read and follow the instructions at the top of the form before you start writing anything.

Make no spelling mistakes. Take the time to use your best handwriting.

Be honest. If an employer learns you lied on the application, you could be fired from your job.

Task #11

Practice your answers on the sample application form on the next few pages.

Application Forms

Look at the first part called **personal data** or **personal information**.

Complete the sample. Look at the next page for tips.

Position being applied for		Date available to begin work
----------------------------	--	------------------------------

PERSONAL DATA

Last Name		Given Name(s)		Social Insurance Number									
							-				-		
Address			Street			Apt. No.		Home Telephone No.					
City			Province			Postal Code		Business Telephone No.					
Are you legally eligible to work in Canada?				Yes		No							
Are you between 18 and 65 years of age?				Yes		No							
Are you willing to re-locate in Ontario?			Yes		No		Preferred location						
To determine your qualification for employment, please provide below and on the reverse, information related to your academic and other achievements including voluntary work, as well as employment history. Additional information may be attached on a separate sheet.													

Application Forms

Personal Data

Position being applied for:

It is best if you write a position here. You can even put down more than one type of job if you like. You should avoid writing “anything.”

Date available:

Write “immediately” if you are available now.

Expected salary:

Write “open” here. Wait until the job offer to talk about salary.

Social Insurance Number:

Legally, you do not have to provide this information until you are hired. But you could hurt your chances of getting the job if you do not include it on the application.

Address and phone numbers:

Include your postal and area codes. Put any reliable backup number under the business phone section.



Application Forms

Look at the next part - **Education**.

Complete the sample. Look at the next page for tips.

EDUCATION

SECONDARY SCHOOL		BUSINESS, TRADE OR TECHNICAL SCHOOL		
Highest grade or level completed		Name of course	Length of course	
Type of certificate or diploma received		License, certificate or diploma awarded? Yes No		
COMMUNITY COLLEGE		UNIVERSITY		
Name of Program	Length of Program	Length of course	Degree awarded Yes No	Pass Honours
Diploma received? Yes No		Major subject		
Other courses, workshops, seminars		Licenses, Certificates, Degrees		
Work related skills				
Describe any of your work related skills, experience or training that relate to the position being applied for.				

Application Forms

Education

Secondary School: Highest grade or level completed:

Mention any upgrading that you have done if you have less than Grade 12. Write “Grade 12 upgrading” if you are working on credit courses.

Other courses, workshops, seminars:

Mention any training programs you have been a part of, on and off the job.

Licenses, certificates, degrees:

All certificates are important. Mention your driver’s license here.

Work related skills:

Never pass up a chance to sell your skills.



Application Forms

The next part is **employment**.

Complete the sample. Look at the next page for tips.

EMPLOYMENT

Name and Address of present/last employer	Present/Last job title	
	Period of employment From To	Present/Last Salary
	Name of Supervisor	Telephone
Type of Business	Reason for Leaving	
Duties/Responsibilities		
Name and Address of previous employer	Present/Last job title	
	Period of employment From To	Final salary
	Name of Supervisor	Telephone
Type of Business	Reason for leaving	

Application Forms

Employment

Name / Address of previous employers:

Application forms often have enough room for three past jobs. Be prepared with all the information asked for on the application for each employer. Know the correct spelling of past supervisors' names.

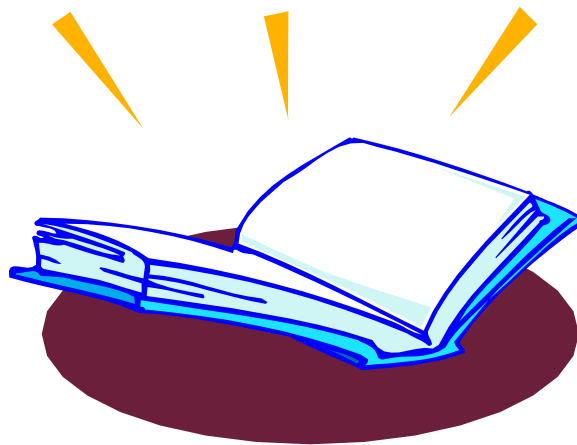
If you cannot fill the space with work experience, list volunteer work.

Duties / Responsibilities:

Application forms do not give much room for describing your duties. Plan exactly what you will say in this small space.

Reason for leaving:

If you left a job on bad terms, put a dash in this section. Be prepared to explain the problem at the job interview.



Application Forms

The next part is the **general information** section.

Complete the sample. Look below for tips.

GENERAL INFORMATION

Are you legally entitled to work in Canada?

Yes

No

If no, explain _____

Have you ever been discharged or requested to resign from any position?

Yes

No

If yes, explain _____

Have you any physical handicaps or health problems that may affect your ability to perform the job?

Yes

No

If yes, explain _____

Are you aware of any reason why you cannot be bonded, such as conviction of a criminal offence for which you did not receive a pardon or for which the pardon was revoked?

Yes

No

If yes, explain _____

Application Forms

General Information

If you have any “problems” like a criminal record, physical disability or being fired from a job, it is best not to mention them on a job application. There is not enough room to explain the situation on the form. Mentioning them here will only harm your chances of getting the job. Just put a dash in the space for these questions and prepare to discuss the issue at the interview.



Application Forms

The next part is the **personal references** section.

Complete the sample.

PERSONAL REFERENCES

Name two persons, other than relatives, from whom we may request references.

1. Name _____ Occupation _____

Address _____

Telephone (_____) _____

2. Name _____ Occupation _____

Address _____

Telephone (_____) _____

Application Forms

Personal References

The best references are former employers. Pick people who will speak highly of you. Call them first to make sure it is OK. Do not use relatives. Do not leave out any of the information requested. Make sure it is up to date.



Application Forms

The next part is the **additional information** section.

Complete the sample. Look at the next page for tips.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Include any additional information which you would like us to consider in connection with your application.

PLEASE READ BEFORE SIGNING

I declare that all the foregoing answers are true and complete and I understand that a false statement may disqualify me from employment or be cause for immediate termination. Further, I am aware that I must pass medical and reference requirements and if employed by _____ have a probationary period. I agree that credit and reference enquiries may be made by _____ at any time.

Signature

Date

Application Forms

Additional Information

Many people leave this space blank. You can stand out from the crowd, if you fill in this section. Prepare an answer that lists your accomplishments, goals, and any other thing that would make you the right person for the job.

Signature

The job application is a very serious document. By signing it, you are swearing that what you have written is true. Employers often check the details of what you have entered on the form. If they find any false information, you may not be hired or you could be fired at a later date.



Application Forms

Task #12

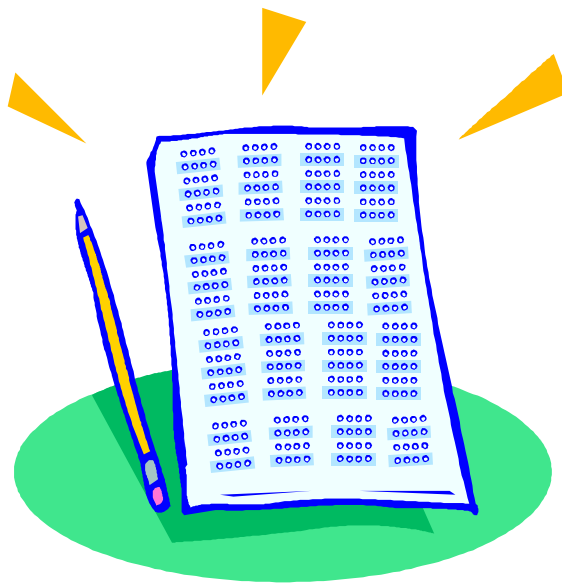
Once you have completed these forms, work with your coach to get an actual application form. You may have to go to an employer to get one. Since, all application forms are a little different, try to find an employer that hires for the position you are seeking. That way your chances of finding a form similar to the ones you will be filling out in the future are increased.

Ask your coach to make copies of the application form before you fill it out. You may have to complete this task several times.

Show the form to your coach once it is completed. If necessary, complete it again. You want this form to be perfect. It must describe all of your skills and be free of any errors.

This perfect form is going to be your application form “copy sheet.” You will be using it as an example for filling out all future applications.

Keep your “copy sheet” with you whenever you are looking for work. When you have a new form to fill out, simply copy the information from your “copy sheet.” It will take the fear – and risk – out of completing application forms.



Benefits Statement

No one ever got a job without talking to an employer.

You must prepare yourself for talking to employers in person or over the phone. You have to make the most of the chances you get to talk to the person who has the power to hire you. You can do this by making a benefits statement, which is a short summary of your skills and interests.

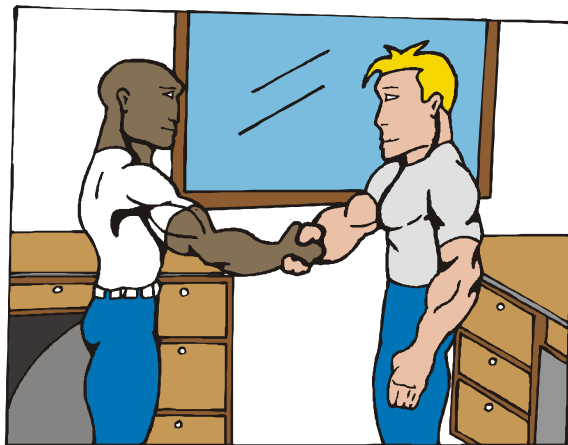
A benefit statement is brief and to the point. Here's how it works:

1. Say hello to the employer and tell them your name.
2. Tell the employer about your experience and abilities.
3. Ask for a personal interview.

Examples of Benefits Statements

Hello, my name is Bill James. I have two years cooking experience in restaurants. I looked at your restaurant's menu and I can cook everything on it. Could I meet with you sometime to talk about how my skills would assist your business?

Hello, my name is Mai Chin. I have five years experience working on an assembly line in a tire plant. I have always paid attention to the quality of my work and I am a quick learner. May I meet with you sometime to discuss how I would add to your team?



Task #13

Write a rough draft of your benefits statement and discuss with it with your coach.

Prepare your own benefit statement. Make it simple and easy to remember. Follow these 3 steps.

1. Say hello to the employer and tell them your name.
2. Tell the employer about your experience and abilities.
3. Ask for a personal interview.

Write many practice drafts before completing this form. Work with your coach to add the final touches.

Task #14

You need to memorize your benefits statement. You must be ready to say it to employers at any moment. Make sure that you are comfortable with the meaning and pronunciation of all the words you use.

From now on your coach will ask you to start and finish all of your job search meetings by saying your benefits statement. Practice makes perfect. You do not want to forget your lines in front of an employer.

You will get other chances to practise your writing skills later in the manual.

Portfolios

You must be organized when looking for work. You do not want to be running around at the last minute trying to find your references or the latest and greatest version of your resume. These documents must be at your fingertips at all times. You just never know when you might need them. The best way to become organized is to put together a portfolio.

It should include the following items:

- resumes
- covering letters
- reference sheets
- copies of important certificates / licences
- your practice application form
- computer disk containing these documents
- a copy of your benefits statements

You should have all the items that you need to plan your job search, including:

- a day planner, note pad, pens
- stamps
- city maps, bus schedules
- copies of want ads / postings that you applied for
- the job search planning sheets provided at the back of this manual

The best container for your portfolio is a binder within a liner that zips closed. That way everything stays together. You should take your portfolio with you whenever you are performing any job search activity – including all of your meetings with your job search coach.

Task #15

Work with your coach to put together your portfolio. Complete this task before continuing with other job search activities. Make sure that your coach has print and computer copies of all your job search documents.

Personal Appearance

Another side of being prepared for job searching is to always look your best. You never know when you might have the chance to talk to an employer about a job. Dress for success whenever you meet with employers, references, employment counsellors, job search coaches, and networking contacts.

Paying attention to the way you look can also make you feel better about yourself.

Things you should do to have a successful image:

- have clean, styled hair
- bathe and use deodorant
- shave or keep a neat beard
- have fresh breath
- have clean fingernails
- be careful - tattoos, lip and nose rings, and other alternative looks can harm your image

- not overdoing it on jewellery, perfume, or makeup
- wear clean clothes
- wear clothes that would be expected on the job
- wear a watch so that you can arrive on time
- have portfolio that keeps your documents wrinkle free (put some extra paper and pens in there, too)

And wear a winning smile!

Personal Appearance

Task #16

You don't want to be running around trying to get a new outfit and a haircut the day before a job interview.

Get organized today. Talk to your coach about what would be a suitable interview outfit for you. If you don't have these articles of clothing, your coach can help you find inexpensive clothes in your community.

Once you have an outfit and have polished your image, attend the next meeting with your coach dressed as if you were going to an interview.

Your coach will give you some feedback on how you are doing.

Practise makes perfect.



Using the Job Bank?

Perhaps the easiest way to look for work is to use the **Job Bank** run by Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC).

The HRSDC Job Bank is a great free service. It is a must on anyone's job search. It is full of employers actively seeking employees. It lists qualifications, locations, and even wages for jobs. It provides all of the information necessary to apply for a position.

It is found at all HRSDC offices and kiosks (separate computer locations often set up in malls and other public places). Despite this availability, traveling to a Job Bank location can often be difficult. Other problems include using the computers, line-ups, or feeling uncomfortable going to a new place.

If you have any difficulties using the Job Bank, ask your coach for help. He or she may be able to arrange to have someone go to the Job Bank with you and teach you how to use it.

There is another choice, though...

The Job Bank is on the Internet.



Using the Internet Version of the Job Bank

The Job Bank now has an easy to use website – www.jobbank.gc.ca. This has many benefits.

First, it is convenient. The Job Bank is available right in your classroom, so it can and should be checked every time you are at the learning centre.

Second, by using the website, you are also adding to your Internet skills while you are looking for work.

Third, it gives you the chance to discuss jobs with your coach while you are using the Job Bank. This will give both of you a clearer idea of what jobs are right for you.

Fourth, using the Job Bank with your coach will help to speed up the job application process. For example, if the job posting gives you the choice of faxing or emailing your resume, your coach can help you take care of that right away. Remember the story about the early bird getting the worm? You cannot afford to let others get a head start on you.

Fifth, since you are in the classroom, you can get started right away on writing a covering letter. You will also have your coach's help. Do not apply for a position on the Job Bank without at least a basic letter. **You cannot assume that the employer will know what job you are applying for without a cover letter.**

Sixth, the Job Bank leaves you with a near-perfect record of your job search activities. Print copies of all the postings that you apply for. Keep these in a file in your portfolio. The postings provide information for log sheets and follow-up. They can also be helpful evidence towards meeting any job search obligations that you have.

Using the Internet Version of the Job Bank

Task #17

Book time with your coach to learn how to use the Job Bank. When you think you have mastered it, complete the assignment below on your own.

Use the Internet to find three jobs. Print out the jobs. Use the print outs to complete the following form.

Job Bank Form

Position	Pay	Location	Employer	Qualifications

* A full-sized copy of this form is in the “forms section” at the end of the manual.

Task #18

Negotiate with your coach how often you are going to check the Job Bank. If you luck out and find a job that you wish to apply for before you have completed this manual, ask your coach to help you apply for it right away.

Finding Free Copies of Newspapers and Journals

Newspapers and journals are a great source of advertised jobs. Journals include magazines and newsletters. Jobs are usually found in the **help wanted** section of the **classified ads**.

The difficulty with newspapers is that they usually cost money. Most people can't afford to buy several newspapers every day. The good news is with a little digging you might be able to get your hands on free copies.

Here are some ideas on where to find newspapers and journals:

- employment agencies
- social service agencies
- libraries
- Internet

Task #19

In order to job search effectively, you need to know where the jobs are advertised. Work with your coach to find out what newspapers and other publications have a help wanted section.

Second find a source for looking at these publications. Many newspapers are on the Internet, so start there. Follow that step by using the resources listed above.

Record the information on the chart on the following page so you always have it at your fingertips.



Finding Free Copies of Newspapers and Journals

Note: The column “Location” refers to where you would actually go to see the newspaper – the library for example.

The column “Classified Day” refers to the fact that most newspapers have one day of the week when they have more want ads than usual.

Newspapers and Journals Forms

Name	Location	Web Address	Classified Day

* A full-sized copy of this form is in the “forms section” at the end of the manual.

Once again, if you find a job before you are ready to apply, ask your coach for help.

Networking

Ask everyone you meet about jobs

Have you ever heard the saying “it’s who you know, not what you know”. There is some truth to it. If you want to find work, you must get out there and meet people. Then you must ask those people to help you meet even more people. It’s called networking.

Ask all of these people for help with your search:

- every friend and family member
- every person in your address book
- every store owner or sales clerk you deal with
- every person who comes to your house to do repairs
- every gas station attendant you know
- every doctor or medical worker you know
- every teacher you know
- every religious leader you know
- every person in your church or religious group
- everyone you know in service groups or clubs
- every new person you meet
- every employer you talk to

Follow these steps with each contact:

1. Let these people know you are looking for work.
2. Give them a copy of your resume.
3. Ask them if they know of any job leads.
4. Check back with them from time to time.

Building Your Own Network

Task #20

Write down the names of 3 people you know who can help you find work. Put each persons name in Column A. Ask each of these people for the names and numbers of 3 people who could also assist you. Put this information in the B sections. If you do this you will have made 12 contacts. Ask each contact you make for new names and contact information. Before you know it, you will have a large network of people helping you. Be very specific about getting the contact information for the person who has the power to hire you. If you find it helpful, work with your coach to write a script that will help you talk to people.

A. _____

B. _____

A. _____

B. _____

A. _____

B. _____

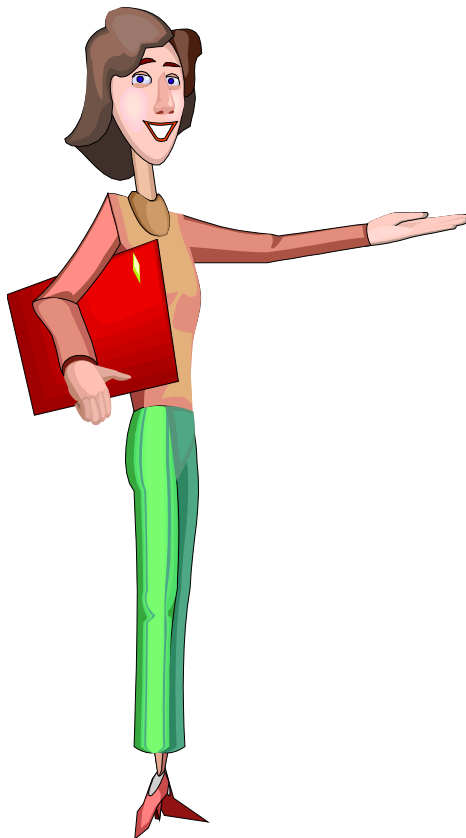
Government Funded Employment Agencies

These agencies provide a wide variety of services to job seekers, such as career counselling, job searching assistance and even job creation. Examples of these agencies include Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSDC), Career Edge, and Job Connect.

Government funded agencies are there to assist you with your job search. It is important that you get in touch with them because you need as many eyes and ears working for you as possible.

Contacting these agencies also helps you with your communication skills and self-confidence. This Supported Job Search is preparing you to speak face to face with employers about jobs.

Meeting with someone at a government-funded agency (a person who is paid to help people like you) is an excellent way of getting ready for future contact with employers.



Government Funded Employment Agencies

Task #21

Work with your coach to find the government-funded employment agencies in your area. Use the phone book, Internet, and community directories.

Enter the information you find in the following table.

Government Funded Agency Contact Form

Name	Address	Phone Number	Appointment

* A full-sized copy of this form is in the “forms section” at the end of the manual.

If possible, locate the agencies on a map and see which ones would be possible for you to visit.

Task #22

Call each agency and use the following script, or work with your coach to use a script that you are more comfortable with.

Government Funded Employment Agencies

Telephone Call Script

“Hello, I would like to know what services you provide to people who are looking for work”.

“Do I have to make an appointment or may I just drop in?”

(If you have to make an appointment, either make one right away or call back later if you need more time to think about it).

“What are your office hours?”

“Thank you for your help.”

If you find it too hard to write the information about the services down, ask them to mail, fax, or e-mail you a brochure.

Excellent work.

Talk to your coach about the call before contacting the next agency. Discuss any changes that you would like to make to the script and continue with calling all the agencies on your list.



Visiting Government Funded Agencies

Task # 23

If you plan to visit an agency, fill in the “appointment / visit” column on the **agency contact form** you have been using. Make a list of agencies you will visit. Work with your coach to locate them on the map and plan your route.

Take your portfolio with you on all visits. Make sure that it is full of plenty of copies of all your job search documents.

Goals for Each Visit

1. Get the business card of the person you met. Put it in your portfolio.
2. Write down the date and time of your next appointment.
3. Ask for a list of employers who hire in your field, and get the following information for each. Use the “Employer Leads” form on page 79 to record this information.
 - contact name
 - company name
 - type of company
 - address
 - fax
 - e-mail
4. Write down the name of any books or directories (directory) that you get the information form. Perhaps your job coach can help you get your own copy.
5. Write down and complete any tasks assigned by the person you met.
6. Write down any other useful information from the meeting.

Task # 24

Discuss this first visit with your job search coach and share the information you gathered. Use this information to plan your next visit. Repeat this task after each visit.

Private Employment Agencies

More employers than ever hire through agencies. People often mistakenly refer to them as “temp agencies.” Many employers now use these agencies to screen employees for permanent positions.

Examples:

- Drake
- Manpower
- Adecco
- Kelly

Agencies play too important a role in the job market to be overlooked. They also provide you with one of the best chances to practice your job search skills.

Task #25

Step 1

Start by using the yellow pages to find the employment agencies in or near your community. List them below. Notice that some of them might be for specific industries, such as clerical or industrial.

Private Employment Agency Form

Agency	Address	Phone Number	Appointment

* A full-sized copy of this form is in the “forms section” at the end of the manual.

Step 2

Select the agencies that are suitable for the position you are seeking and prepare to call them. This is an excellent chance to practise your telephone skills. The following script is to help you with the call. Remember, the point of the call is to apply for positions. Don't quit until you find a way to get your resume into the hands of the person who has the power to hire you. Once again, if you don't like this script, work with your coach to write one that you are more comfortable with.

Telephone Call Script:

“Hello, may I please speak to the person in charge of hiring.”

“I am looking for a job in_____. May I register with your agency for these positions?”

If they say no, it is probably because they do not hire for these positions. They might specialize in another area of employment. No problem – just keep trying until you reach the agencies that hire in your field of work.

If they say yes....

“How would I go about registering?”

They will most likely ask you to come in for an appointment.
If so...

- ask for the name of the person you will be meeting.
- ask if you be required to do any testing.
- ask for directions to the agency if you need them.

After the call, be sure to write down the time and date of your appointment.

Task #26

Discuss your first call with your job search coach. Make any necessary changes to your script before calling any more agencies. If you know that you will have to do some testing, be sure to tell your coach. He or she can help you prepare for the tests.

Private Employment Agencies

Appointments

It is important that you are very well prepared for all meetings with private employment agencies.

Private agencies are not there to help you. They are paid to help employers find the best people for employment. You must present yourself as the most qualified person for the job.

Your visit will be like a job interview. So prepare for it by reading the interview section of this manual on pages 84 – 96.

In fact, it would be best if you did a practice job interview with your coach.

Take your portfolio with you on all agency visits. Make sure it is well stocked with extra copies of all of your job search documents.

Task #27

Meet with your coach after your appointment. Discuss how you will improve you next meeting with a private employment agency. Do this after each appointment.

Note:

Many people have a negative attitude towards private employment agencies. First, job seekers say that they are not looking for temporary work. As mentioned earlier, however, the work often is short-term. Also, if you have been unemployed for a long time it can be difficult to jump right into a permanent, full-time position. You can improve your chances of getting a job by being open to temporary work. It's a quick way to get some new experience and references.

Second, some people get quite upset by the fact that some employment agencies are deducting a fee from their wages. This is a natural feeling, but it is a barrier to employment. Try to counter this feeling by reminding yourself that the agency won't get a "cut" if the job becomes permanent. Also, look beyond the money to the new experience, new references, and a great opportunity to test whether the job is right for you.

Applying for Advertised Positions

If you apply for an advertised position, follow these steps.

Step 1

Review your resume. Make sure that it is up to date, and that it includes all the information relating to the job you are applying for.

Step 2

Take your general cover letter (it should be saved on disk) and insert into the first paragraph:

- the position you are applying for
- how you found out about the job

Using the sample letter from page 22, the first paragraph would be changed to read:
Please accept this letter as application for the Machine Operator position advertised in the Kingston Whig-Standard on April 19, 1997. Enclosed please find my resume for your review.

Step 3

In the second paragraph of the general cover letter, explain how your experience matches what the ad asks for.

Now you know that it only takes a few minutes to make a cover letter for every position you apply for. Take the time to do so. It will greatly improve your chances of getting a job interview.

Task #28

Work with your coach to practise a letter change based on an actual advertised job and save it on your disk under the name “practice letter.”

Help Wanted Signs

Help wanted signs posted in employers' windows are a gift to job searchers. What could be better than having an employer come right out and invite you to apply for a position?

You can't really plan your job search around seeing help wanted signs, but you want to be ready when you do find them. It's important to always have your portfolio fully stocked when you are job searching. If you see a sign and it has no phone number on it, the usual approach is to visit the workplace.

If you are ready (have resume, look good, are mentally prepared) do it immediately.

If not, come back.

Enter the business and say:

“I would like to talk to the person in charge of hiring for the help wanted job.”

If you get to talk to that person, be prepared to:

- ask about the position
- say your benefits statement
- give your resume
- fill out an application form

Before leaving, write down the name of the contact person, and the name and phone number of the company.

Help Wanted Signs

If you can't speak to the person in charge of hiring, ask for his or her name and phone number. Make a follow-up call later to be sure that the right person received your resume.

The key with help wanted signs is seizing the moment. Everyone else can see the sign, too. You want to be first in line. You can't afford to wait until tomorrow.

Planning a search for help wanted signs

Although it is not the best strategy, you may want to plan a search for help wanted signs.

Some employers are more likely than others to use help wanted signs:

- restaurants and bars
- retail

If you are seeking a job in these fields, you can go to areas where a lot of these employers are gathered together, such as a mall or downtown. If you are planning a search in one of these areas, be prepared to apply for the position immediately.



Task #29

If you are planning a search for help wanted ads, meet with your coach to plan your trip. Dress as you would for your job search so that your coach can give you some feedback on your appearance. Practise what you will say to employers.

Make sure that your portfolio is stocked with everything you need. Plan your route.

Meet with your coach after your planned job search activity to discuss ways of making your strategy even better next time.

Unadvertised Jobs

You must always be looking for more employers. Looking for work should be a full-time job. You need to be applying for jobs every day. You will have to move beyond relying on advertised positions and employment agencies. You will have to dig up your own leads.

This can be done in many ways. You should try them all. Ask your coach for assistance.

1. Keep working on your networking. Ask people if they know of workplaces that are accepting applications.
2. Walk or drive around your community looking for employers. Be prepared to write down their names and addresses so you can look them up in the phone book later.
3. Use a business directory to find employers. Ask your coach or your contact at a government employment agency to help you find one. A business directory is much better than a phone book because it usually includes the following company information:
 - full company name
 - manager's name
 - full mailing address
 - fax and email information
 - company information

Enter this information in the “Employer Leads Form.”

4. Use the phone book yellow pages. Business directories often don't include smaller companies. The phone book lists more businesses, but offers less information. You won't get a postal code, fax, or email address. This information might be available in another source. Ask your coach to help you fill in the blanks.
5. Keep in touch with agencies

Contact with Employers

Once you have found a position that you want to apply for, you must contact the employer.

Contact with employers is probably the hardest part of job searching. Most would people would prefer to send out resumes and hope for an interview.

Contact usually falls into four categories:

- going to fill out an application form
- sending /delivering a resume
- talking in person
- talking over the phone

People often apply for work in the easiest way possible. They will either use the fax or mail to send a resume, or visit the workplace and quickly leave a resume with the first person they meet.

Remember the easiest way usually has the lowest chance of working.

You must put in a lot more effort and learn two things about every employer:

- who does the hiring?
- how do they hire?

If you don't know these things, you are wasting your time and effort. There is no point in sending a resume to the wrong person or sending a resume to a company that requires you to fill out an application form.

You will have to do some detective work to get the facts.

Task #30

Always work with your coach to decide on the best way to apply for a position.

Planning Contact with Employers

Focus on the Employer's needs. Not yours.

It is best to find out what the employer's needs are before you contact them. That way you will know exactly how to sell yourself.

Use your contacts, business directories and the Internet to find out the following things about the employer before you call. You could even get the information by calling the employer yourself.

- What are their products and services?
- What skills and experience do they look for in people?
- What type of machinery do they use?
- Is their business growing?
- When do they make hiring decisions?
- Who is the best person to talk to about job openings?

Task #31

Find the information listed above for three employers that you would like to work for. Discuss what you found with your coach before contacting these employers.

Talking to Employers in Person

Going to visit an employer can be a good way of looking for work. It is your best choice if you do not have a phone. Three things are very important if you decide to apply for work in person.

Be Prepared

1. Look your best.
2. Have everything in your portfolio: resumes, references, pens, paper, etc.
3. Be polite and understand that the people you talk to are busy.

The Good Side

- It is a quick way to leave your resume or fill out an application.
- You might be lucky enough to meet with someone.
- People will remember you better if they see your face.

The Bad Side

- The people there may be too busy to speak with you.
- You often can't get past the front desk.
- It could be faster and cheaper to call first to see if it's worth going in person.

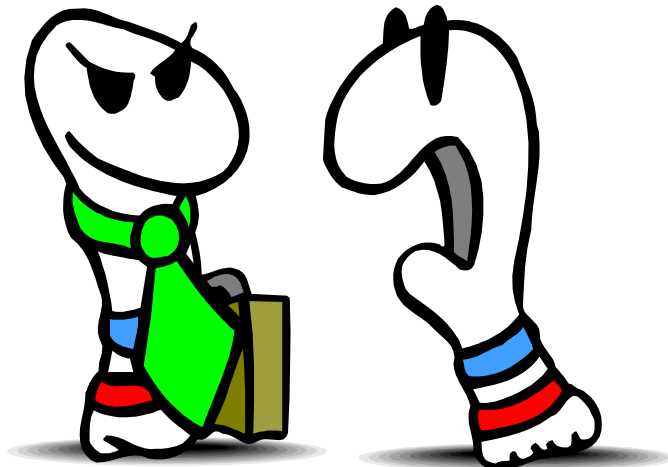
Talking to Employers in Person

When Visiting Employers in Person

1. Ask the front desk person for the manager or the person in charge of hiring. It is best if you can ask for this person by name. You might be able to learn his or her name through your contacts or by calling first.
2. Tell this person your benefits statement.
3. Try to arrange a time for an interview. If they say no, see if you can leave your resume and fill out an application form. Ask if there is good time to check back again.

Task #32

Practise these steps with your coach until you feel ready to ask employers about jobs.



Talking to Employers on the Telephone

Most experts agree that talking to employers on the phone is the best way to find job leads. The telephone is fast and easy. Your chances of reaching the person who has the power to hire you are higher on the phone than in person.

Be Prepared

1. Call from a quiet spot.
2. Have a pen and paper ready for addresses, people's names, directions, etc.
3. Have your resume handy in case you are asked for more information.
4. Use notes to help you get through the first few calls.
5. Practise by calling friends.
6. Be cheerful, polite, and confident.

The Good Side

- The phone gives you the best chance of talking to the person who has the power to hire you.
- You can arrange to meet with people. Then you see people when they have the time to listen to you.
- The phone is a great tool for finding information.
- You can save a lot of time using the phone.
- You can do it from home, where you feel at ease.

The Bad Side

- Many people feel uncomfortable using the telephone. A little practice will make you feel a lot better.

Talking to Employers on the Telephone

What To Say To Employers On The Telephone.

1. To the person answering the telephone

A. If you do not know the manager's name

Hello my name is _____. Would you please tell me the name of the person in charge of the _____ department? (write down name.) Thank you. May I please speak with him / her? Thank you. **If you do not know the name of the department you should be speaking to, ask for the personnel office. If it is a very small employer, ask for the manager.**

OR

B. If you do know the manager's name

Hello, may I please speak with _____? Thank you.

2. When speaking to the manager

Hello _____, my name is _____

Read your benefit statement here _____

Talking to Employers on the Telephone

It is important to make the most of your talk with the manager. You have worked hard to reach this moment. Ask for an interview. If they won't do that, ask if you can send a resume. If they say no, ask if you can call again. Make sure you cover all your bases when you are talking to the manager. You might not get another chance to speak with him / her.

3. After step 2, follow the script in the table below.

<p>If they say yes to an interview</p> <p>Set date and time, and write down address.</p>	<p>If they say no to an interview</p> <p>Say, "I see. In that case may I drop my resume off at your office and possibly see you for a few minutes?"</p>
<p>If they agree to meet you</p> <p>Set date and time.</p>	<p>If they do not agree to meet you</p> <p>Say, "okay, may I send you a resume."</p>
<p>If they will accept your resume</p> <p>Get name, title and mailing address, fax or email.</p>	<p>If they won't accept your resume</p> <p>Say, "do you know of any other companies that might benefit from my skills."</p>
<p>If they have suggestions</p> <p>Say, "one final thing, may I call you back in one month's time in case there have been any changes? Thank you. Goodbye."</p>	<p>If they don't have suggestions</p> <p>Say, "one final thing. May I call you back in one month's time in case there have been any changes? Thank you. Goodbye."</p>

Talking to Employers on the Telephone

Task #33

Practise this script with your coach. If you are uncomfortable using the script, work with your coach to write one that you feel more comfortable with.

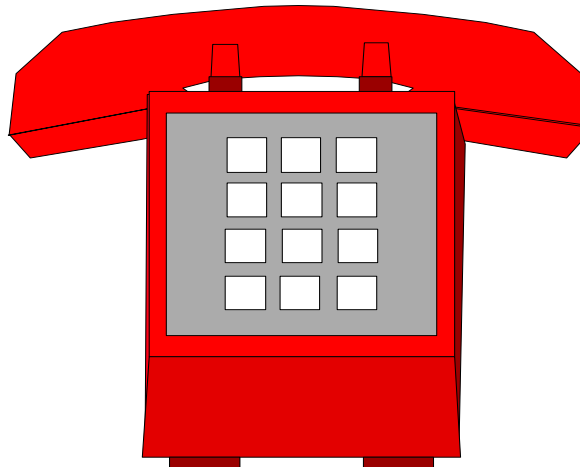
Task #34

Plan a time to contact employers by phone. Start with one employer on your first day, three employers the next time, and five employers the time after that.

Talk to your coach between each round of calls to find ways of improving your technique.

Don't forget to record all the information you learn from your phone calls.

If you do not have a phone, ask your coach if there is a time when you can use the learning centre's phone to call employers



Contacting Employers by Mail

Sometimes you can only contact employers by writing to them. This is often the case in response to a want ad. If you are applying for work this way, it is best to attach a covering letter to your resume.

Be Prepared

1. Have the full mailing address.
2. Have the name (correctly spelled) and title of the person who has the power to hire you.
3. Attach the cover letter to your resume.

The Good Side

- Mailing is an easy way to look for work.
- Mailing is a cheap way to look for work outside your area.
- You can introduce yourself in a letter and then call later to see if they read your resume.

The Bad Side

- Mailing can get expensive.
- Busy people might not stop to read your resume.
- You don't have a chance to make a strong personal connection.
- Mailing without a follow-up phone call is not a good way to look for work.

Faxing Job Applications

Information technology has certainly improved communication over the years. It is important that job searchers keep up with the times. This means learning the pros and cons of faxes and emails.

Faxes are a fast, easy, and often free way of applying for positions. Social Services and many employment agencies offer free faxing, even if it is long distance.

Even though your learning centre has a fax machine for you to use if necessary, there are two reasons why it would be better to send your faxes from another helpful agency. First, you can keep your communications and networking skills fresh by working with new people. Second, who knows, you might even uncover a job lead while there.

Faxing also has a downside. The first problem is that the person who has the power to hire you often doesn't receive your fax. This isn't a minor issue. This is one of the worst things that can happen to a job searcher.

You must do two things to avoid this problem.

First, as always, write a cover letter. Don't start from scratch. Make some changes to the one that you have saved on disk from your earlier task on cover letters. The letter will let the employer know what position you are interested in and why you are the right person for the job.

Second, fill out the fax transmission sheet for every position that you apply for. It makes sure that your fax arrives intact at the desk of the person who has the power to hire you. **A fax transmission sheet is provided on the next page for you to use.**

Another major problem with faxes is their appearance. Ask your coach to show you a received fax so that you know what they look like. If you are not satisfied with the quality, you should find another way to get your resume to the employer. Many people send a fax first and deliver a nicer copy of their resume later.

Task #35

Ask your coach to teach you how to send a fax. It is a valuable skill to have.

Fax Transmission Sheet

Date: _____

Sent to: _____

Sent from: _____

Phone # _____

Fax # _____

Please accept my application for the following job:

Comments: _____

Total pages, including transmission sheet: _____

Thank you.

Email

Some people prefer to send their resume by email. The Internet cannot be beat for speed, and it should not be overlooked for that reason. It does, however, have many problems. We need to be extremely careful in using it.

If you do not have experience with email, you shouldn't try to use it on your own right now. It is too easy to make a mistake when sending your resume to an employer.

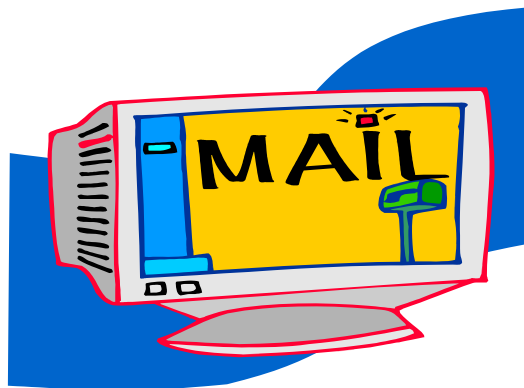
Instead, ask your coach to help you apply for jobs by email. You should use email in the following situations:

- when you need to send something long-distance for free.
- when the application deadline is really close.
- when applying by email is the only choice the employer is giving you.

Ask your coach to show you how to apply for jobs using email. It is becoming a survival skill in our society.

Email Experts

You may already be an expert with email. If so, talk to your coach about the best way to use it as part of your job search. There are, however, two problems to watch out for. First, email is not a substitute for face-to-face communication with employers. Second, use a professional sounding email address. For example, Badman.com will not do. If possible, use your first initial and last name.



Follow-up Calls to Employers

After applying for a job, call the employer to see if the right person received your application.

Telephone Call Script

“Hello, may I speak to _____.”(the person from your list)

“Hi my name is _____. I sent you a job application a few days ago and I am calling to see if you received it.”

If they say yes....

“Thank you for checking.” Tell them your benefits statement and ask them to keep you in mind for future positions.

If they say no....

Ask if you can send it again. Confirm their contact information.

“Thank you for your time”.

Keep track of all of your applications and follow-up in your log sheet provided at the back of the manual.

Task #36

Practise a follow-up call with your coach. As always, feel free to change the script to something you are more comfortable with.

Try a follow-up call with an employer and discuss it with your coach before making anymore.

Planning Your Job Search

Looking for work is hard work. You need a plan and you need to stick to it. This program will help you prepare for your job search. A good job search plan should cover the following steps.

Steps to Planning a Good Job Search

1. Set a time goal for getting a new job. Make a plan for how much time you will spend each day looking for work.
2. Choose what kinds of jobs you are going to look for.
3. Make a resume, reference sheet and practice application form.
4. Prepare a short benefits statement for talking to employers.
5. Contact people and agencies who can help you.
6. Make a list of employers to contact and do some research on them.
7. Practise talking to employers in person and on the phone.
8. Check newspapers and employment centres.
9. Keep track of all the contacts you meet.
10. Contact employers as often as you can.
11. Practise for the job interview.



Planning Your Job Search

The Five Best Ways to Find Work

Method	Success rate (% of people finding work this way)
1. Apply directly to employers	35%
2. Ask family, friends, and contacts	28%
3. Ads in newspapers	14%
4. Private employment agencies	6%
5. Government employment centres (Job Bank)	5%

As you can see, people who just rely on the HRSDC Job Bank only have a success rate of 5%. Newspaper ads (14%) are not much better.

This is not to say that they are bad ways of looking for work. It's just that they are a small part of job searching.

When you plan your job search, you should spend most of your time finding your own job leads by:

1. Using every resource to find leads
2. Asking everyone you meet about jobs
3. Asking employers about openings

Your job search plan should be based on these priorities.

Setting Weekly Goals

You need to set weekly goals and have a plan to meet them. People with goals achieve more than those who don't.

Below is a sample of a completed weekly planning sheet. You can find a blank copy in the forms section at the back of this manual.

Recording Weekly Goals

The actual amount column is used to record your actual activities during the week.

The extra blank lines are for other job search activities that you and your coach might think of. If there is a big gap between your goal and the actual amount, please talk to your coach about ways of fixing the problem.

Weekly Goals Form

Task	Goal	Actual amount
Finding new employers	20 new employers	
Employer visits	10	
Employer calls	10	
New network contacts	10	
Check newspaper ads	every day	
Private employment agencies	make appointments and keep in touch	
Government agencies	make appointments and keep in touch	
Check Job Bank	every day	
Employer follow-up: see if resume arrived, remind them you are still looking for work	10	
Total applications submitted	15	

* A blank copy of this form is in the "forms section" at the end of the manual.

Setting Weekly Goals

Task #37

Throughout your Supported Job Search, you will have regular meetings with your coach. Some meetings will be for planning your week of activities. Others will be to review how you did and to focus on areas where you need extra support.

Practise for these weekly meetings by working with your coach to complete this planning sheet. These are your goals so be very open with your coach about what you think you can achieve. Tell your coach about any barriers you may face; he or she may have some ideas on how to remove the barriers.



Keeping Track of Employer Leads

You need to keep track of your employer leads. This sheet is can be used with any method of finding employers: job bank, networking, business directory, Yellow Pages, visits to employment agencies, etc.

Employer Leads Form

Date	Employer	Phone / Fax / Email / Website	Contact Names and their Positions	More information

* A full-sized copy of this form is in the “forms section” at the end of the manual.

Task #38

Use the yellow pages or a business directory to find information for 5 employers that might hire you. Record the information and discuss it with your job coach before looking for more.

Keeping Track of Employer Contacts

You usually have to get in touch with an employer several times before you get hired. First, you apply for the job, and then you make a follow-up call. With any luck your efforts will lead to an interview. Since you will be dealing with many employers, it can become difficult to know what stage you are at with each one.

The Employer Contact Form will keep all of this information right at your fingertips.

Task #39

Record the information for three employers. Discuss possible improvements with your coach before adding more employers.

Employer Contact Form

Employer / Address	Phone / Fax / Email	Contact person / Title	Application / follow-up / Interview	Comments
Top Dollar Store 15 Smith Ave. Kingston, ON K0K 37L	Ph: 555-1706 Fax: 555-1492	Bob Jones, Owner	Called about how to apply for work	Mr. Jones said that I should fax him a resume

* A full-sized copy of this form can be found in the forms section at the end of the manual.

Keeping Track of Weekly Tasks

Good information is the key to your success. Keep track of all of your activities.

The following sheet can be used for a wide variety of weekly tasks that you can keep track of, including:

- applying for a job
- visiting an employment centre
- doing research at the library
- finding new employers
- networking
- checking the Job Bank
- reading the help wanted ads
- meeting with your Coach

Weekly Task Tracking Form

Date	Task	Comment

* A full-sized copy of this form is in the “forms section” at the end of the manual.

Task #40

Meet with your coach to discuss planning and recording your job search activities.

That is how you plan and track your job search. Planning is the most important part of the job search. Arrange to have regular meetings with your coach to make and review your weekly job search plans.

The Job Interview

If you stick to your job search plan, odds are you will get a job interview.

The interview is the ultimate job search task. It is where all the other steps are meant to lead. This does not mean that all those steps have prepared you for the interview. It is in a league of its own. People are assessed on an entirely different level now. Job seekers will have to prepare and perform better than ever.

What is a Job Interview?

An interview is a meeting between a job seeker and an employer. The purpose is to see if there is a match between the person and the job. All of the steps you have taken so far have been leading to the interview. There is a lot riding on the interview. If you perform well, you could get the job. Once again, the key to success is preparation.

What the employer is looking for.

The employer already knows something about your skills and interests from reading your resume. They are using the interview to learn more about you as a person. Three questions are of key importance to the employer:

- 1. Do you have what it takes to get the job done?**
- 2. Will you get along with your co-workers?**
- 3. Will you have good work habits and stay on the job?**

The Job Interview

The interview does not give the employer a lot of time to know a lot about you. So, their first impression of you will make a big difference.

Three Easy Steps to Making a Good Impression

1. Preparation

- write down the time, date, and place of the interview
- know who you will be meeting
- plan how you will get there and arrive 10 minutes early
- learn as much as you can about the job (ask the employer for a job description and use your contacts to learn more)
- read over the interview questions on the following pages and practice your answers (get a friend to pretend he / she is interviewing you)
- bring resumes, references, certificates, licences, pens and paper to the interview

2. Look Your Best

- find out what people who work there wear - ask an employee or visit to see for yourself
- have a clean interview outfit ready at all times
- do not smoke before the interview
- look organized: have your papers neat and clean in a binder or folder
- take a look back at the checklist on page 42 to see other ways of looking your best

The Job Interview

3. Show Interest, Friendliness, and Confidence

- start the interview with a smile and a handshake
- remember the interviewers' names
- sit up straight and try not to fidget
- maintain eye contact with interviewers
- show that you have done research about the job
- ask questions that show interest
- talk about the good work you have done on the job and in your personal life
- thank the interviewers for their time and send a thank you note right after the interview



Job Interview Questions

There are many questions that you could be asked during an interview. The best way to prepare is to learn as much as you can about the job by using your network and asking the employer for a job description before the interview.

Identify your strengths and match them to each of the job duties and qualifications. Remind the employer of your strengths whenever you can during the interview.

Below are some of the most asked interview questions. Prepare for your interviews by planning answers to these questions. Practise your answers with a friend, on a camcorder, or tape recorder.

Common Interview Questions

1. Tell me about yourself.

Tip: state your qualifications, abilities, and interests.

2. Tell me about your experience with this kind of work.

Tip: state your experience, transferable skills, and ability to learn.

3. Why do you want to work here?

Tip: state what you know and like about the employer. Tell them that your skills match what they are looking for. Do not focus on wages and benefits.

4. Why did you leave your last job?

Tip: if the reasons were beyond your control (lay off, end of contract), just politely say so. If you quit or were fired, say what you did well on the last job, but overall it just was not the right job for you. Focus on the positive and never say anything bad about your employers.

Job Interview Questions

5. What would you like to be doing 5 years from now?

Tip: tell them that you want to stay and grow in the same field.

6. What did your last employer think of you?

Tip: tell them what your employer liked about you. Share any letters of recommendation you have, and mention positive performance evaluations and awards. Do not say anything negative about the employer.

7. What is your greatest strength?

Tip: state the skill or ability that would help you in this job more than any other. Back it up with an example like this: “I work really well with people. On my last job I was asked to plan the summer picnic.”

8. What is your greatest weakness?

Tip: state a weakness that you have taken steps to improve. Tell them that it would not affect the job. Do not pick something too personal.
Example: I am a little behind on my computer skills, but I am catching up by taking courses at the adult education centre.

9. How is your health?

Tip: If you have a health problem that will not prevent you from doing your job, don't mention it. If you do have to mention a problem, convince the employer that you are still capable of doing the job.

10. How long have you been out of work? How often have you changed jobs?

Tip: if you have been out of work for a long time, tell the employer how you have been adding to your skills and knowledge. Point out any upgrading or volunteer work you have done. If you have changed jobs a lot, tell them about jobs that ended due to lay-offs and other reasons beyond your control. Do not talk about quitting or being fired unless you have to.

Job Interview Questions

If You Left a Job on Bad Terms

Sometimes, in an interview you will have to explain a bad work situation from the past. The employer might want to talk to your supervisor from a job that you left on bad terms. It is better to explain the situation in your own words, before they talk to the supervisor about it.

The number one rule is to never say anything negative about your past employers. If you do, the interviewer will think you have a bad attitude.

Suggested Answers

- “I needed a change in my career”
- “it was not the right job for me”
- “because of changes in my duties, the job was no longer right for me”
- focus on the things you did well on the job that the employer would likely agree are true

Another Idea

If you had a problem with your supervisor at an old job, try to find another person at the company to be a reference for you. Someone who was not as involved in the problem might be more willing to help you. Try asking a manager or the head of personnel. Maybe you could get a simple reference letter from them confirming when you worked there and listing some of your good qualities.

Asking Good Job Interview Questions

One of the best ways to show your interest in a job interview is to ask questions. You are usually given a chance to ask questions at the end of the interview. Employers might think you are not interested in the job if you do not have any questions. It is best to prepare some questions that show that you're excited about the job.

Good Questions to Ask in an Interview

- What are the main duties of the position?
- What skills are you looking for?
- What are the hours for the position?
- When will you be making your hiring decision?
- I would like to know more about _____.
(something that interested you)

Questions you should not ask (until you get the job offer).

- What are the wages and benefits?
- How much vacation or sick time is there?

Asking these questions at the interview will make the employer think you are only interested in money and time off.

Job Interview Mistakes

It is true that we can learn from the mistakes of others. Employers have given the following reasons for not hiring people. Keep them in mind as you prepare for your interview.

Top Reasons for not Being Hired

1. Arrived late for interview (call if you must be late)
2. Poor appearance
3. Had a “know it all” attitude
4. Poor language
5. No goals
6. No confidence, too nervous
7. Only interested in money
8. Appeared to be hiding the truth
9. Impolite
10. Said bad things about past employers
11. No eye contact
12. Limp hand shake
13. Showed no interest in the company
14. Offered only short yes and no answers
15. Not willing to start at the bottom



Job Interview Planning Sheet

Task #41

Next time you get a job interview, fill out this interview planning sheet. The hard work you do before the interview will separate you from the pack.

1. Where is the interview and at what time? How will you get there?

2. What are the job title and the duties? Ask for a job description.

3. What do you know about the employer's products, customers, etc.?

4. What will you say about your experience, skills, goals, and interests?

Job Interview Planning Sheet

5. What questions are you going to ask about the job?

6. Are there any problem areas you are worried about (being fired from a job, not having a diploma, etc.)? How are you going to deal with them?



The Job Interview: Pulling It All Together

Interviews are your chance to put your best foot forward. You must be ready to seize the moment. You have to be prepared to sell yourself. You need to keep your nervousness under control. In short, you need to get your act together.

Preparation and practice are the keys to success.

Step 1. Preparation

Job Interview Checklist

You can get ready for your interviews by making sure that you have taken care of all of the matters on the interview checklist. The list has some blanks on it for you add in your own particular concerns (for example: bus fare, map, medication, cell phone).

Job Interview Checklist

Task	Yes	No	Not Needed
Do you have transportation?			
Do you have childcare?			
Do you know exactly where you are going?			
Do you know whom you are meeting?			
Have you researched the company?			
Do you know what the position is?			
Have you reviewed the job description?			
Have you done a practice interview with someone?			
Have you prepared some questions to ask?			
Do you have a proper interview outfit?			
Have you paid extra attention to your appearance?			
Are you taking your references, certificates, etc?			
Are you taking a pen and notepad?			
Are all your papers organized in a file?			
Are you taking your portfolio?			
Are you taking everything the employer asked you to bring?			
Are you planning to arrive 10 minutes early?			
Are you planning not to smoke right before the interview?			
Are you going to turn off your cell phone before starting the interview?			
Are thinking about how to make a good first impression?			
Will you get all of the information you need to contact the interviewers for follow-up?			
Are you going to send a thank you letter?			

* An extra copy of this form is in the “forms section” at the end of the manual.

Job Interview Planning

Task #42

Before each interview, fill out this checklist and discuss it with your coach. Work together to deal with any matters that you are not prepared for.

Step 2. Practice

With the help of your coach it is possible to practice for a job interview. Practice is time well spent. You will be better prepared for interviews and you will be more confident. Being more confident will also help you control any nervousness.

Task #43

Pretend that you get an interview for one of the positions you actually applied for. Go through a practice interview for that job. Study the original job posting / ad to remind yourself exactly what the employer is looking for. Research the company before starting.

Your coach will evaluate your performance. Your interview might even be videotaped so you can actually see how you are doing.

The feedback that you receive from this task will really payoff when you have a real job interview.



The Job Offer

It is very exciting to receive a job offer. But don't let that excitement get in the way of learning important details about the job. Now is the time to ask questions. If you need to think about accepting the job, ask the employer for some time to consider it. Set a time within one day to call about your decision.

If you decide not to take the job, call the employer and thank them for the offer. This connection may be useful to you in the future.

Before Accepting an Offer, Ask the Employer About:

- the job title and duties
- the salary and benefits
- the hours of employment
- is it permanent or temporary employment
- is it a union position
- what kind of training will you get
- when will your performance be reviewed
- chances for promotions and raises
- is the work covered by Employment Insurance

Keep this list by the phone after a job interview.

Second Thoughts About a Job Offer

If you have any doubts about a job offer, ask for a day to think about it.

If you decide that the job is not right for you, call the employer and tell them why you feel that way. There is a chance that they might improve the offer.

Task #44

If you are not sure about a job offer, meet with your coach to discuss your concerns. Work together to find the information you need to make an informed decision.

Talk to your coach, family, and friends about whether you should accept the job.

Perhaps you can find out more about the company from your network, business directories, or the Internet.



Accepting the Job Offer

If you accept the job, ask:

- the day and time that you start
- the address you will be working at and directions
- who you will report to
- identification you should bring
- clothing or tools you should bring
- what the dress code is
- if there is parking available
- if there is any preparation you can do before you start

Keep this list by the phone after a job interview.

Task #45

If you get a job, be sure to let your coach know. Starting a new job can be a stressful time. If you need any support now or during your first few weeks on the job, contact your coach.

Congratulations

Fixing Your Job Search

Job searching is a very difficult thing to do. People often become depressed, thinking that no one would ever hire them.

If you go a long time without getting any interviews or job offers, you will need to look more closely at every part of your employment situation.

Task #46

Evaluate your job search by completing the following form with your coach. Check **all** of the boxes that apply to you.

Your job search may not be working because...

- you do not know all of your skills and talents
- you are not talking to employers who need your skills and talents
- you need to change your goal
- you need to change or add to your job search tools (resume, covering letter, references)
- you need new ways to find where the jobs are
- you need to look for work in another city or region
- you need to know more about selling yourself to employers
- you need to know how to impress an employer in an interview
- you need to improve the way you feel about yourself
- you need to gain more skills and education

If you selected any of the items on the list, you need to talk to your coach about whether you should continue with the Supported Job Search. Perhaps you need to cover or review some earlier steps in the manual. If the problem runs deeper than that, you will need to develop a new plan.

A New Plan

If your job search has run into a serious roadblock, it is time to talk to your coach about a **Plan B**. You need to take an in depth look at your employment situation before continuing with job searching. Your coach can help you find the support that you need.

There are many choices available to you, such as....

- employment counseling
- job finding clubs
- job search workshops
- mental health counseling
- short-term employment certificate training
- training placements
- further education

Task #47

It is time to take a break from your supported job search. There are many different things you can do to improve your employment situation. Work with your coach to make a Plan B. Come up with some positive steps that you can take to help you reach your goal.

In order to continue reaching for my goal of employment, I will...

1.

2.

A New Plan

3.

4.

5.

Thank you for using the Supported Job Search
Good luck in reaching your goal.

*Good
Luck*