



GOAL: Get a job or get a better job or a promotion

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Introduction

During these hard economic times, many people are looking for work. This goal can benefit any of the following groups:

- Workers who have recently lost their jobs;
- Those entering the work force for the first time or after a long absence;
- Those already employed, but who wish to acquire a promotion within the same company or find a different, better-paying job.

Getting Started

Bring any job bulletins, ads or other information pertaining to positions being sought. Together you and your tutor can review the requirements and decide what needs to be done to meet those requirements. You can try interviewing someone who is already in a similar job for some ideas of how to break into that field.

To get started you will need a “job search notebook.” It can be a binder or file folder, just something to keep you organized. In the notebook it is important to document the job search and keep good notes so that you don’t repeat your efforts or forget where you have looked and what happened with each contact you made. Make up your own chart showing where you have looked (company name), the name of the contact and phone number, the job title, the date you made contact, the dates you submitted an application, had an interview, or submitted a resume and the result. It does not matter what the chart looks like as long as you can read it and it is organized. By the way, being organized is a good job skill to have so go ahead and practice now!

Books & Materials

Books

Check your library shelves and/or talk to the reference librarian about finding these or similar materials. Some of these books will likely be in the library's literacy collection so be sure to talk to literacy staff as well:

- Get Hired! Finding job opportunities, Anema Durlynn; Consultant, Ted Pietrzak, Janus Books, 1990.
- Get that Job! A quick and easy guide with worksheets. Jurg Oppliger, New Readers Press Press, 2001.
- Graduate to Your Perfect Job. Jason R. Dorsey, Golden Ladder Productions, 2002.
- No One Will Hire Me! Avoid 15 Mistakes and Win the Job. Ron and Caryl Krannich, Impact Publications, 2004.
- What Color is Your Parachute? A practical guide for job hunting and career changes. Richard Bolles, Ten Speed, 2004.
- Workplace Essential Skills: Employment, Finding a job (DVD). Kentucky Educational Television, 2005.

Websites

JobStar Central: Sample Resume & Cover Letter Templates. <http://jobstar.org/tools/resume/>

A collection of material about job resumes and cover letters. Provides resume tips and templates (such as for chronological or functional organization), sample cover letters, a discussion about resume banks, and links to related resources. From JobStar, a service of California public libraries. (from Librarian's Index to the Internet, lii.org)

Monster.com. One of the largest job search sites on the Internet. Supposedly can search millions of jobs. Certainly one of the most popular sites. Enables job searchers to customize their search, including finding jobs across the whole country. Includes resume creation, interview preparation, and guidance in launching a career. The information in your profile lets you personalize your homepage.

www.caljobs.ca.gov California's Employment Development Department's (EDD) Job Service has a primary mandate to facilitate the match between employers and qualified workers. Describes itself as California's Internet system for linking employer job listings and job seeker résumés. Easy to register and to navigate.

Key Vocabulary

- ◆ application
- ◆ contacts
- ◆ job skills
- ◆ communication skills
- ◆ resume
- ◆ networking
- ◆ mentors
- ◆ cover letter
- ◆ resources
- ◆ contacts
- ◆ personal strengths
- ◆ interview
- ◆ job search notebook
- ◆ personal marketing

Reading Practice

What Color Is Your Parachute? Together read through and do the exercises in What Color is Your Parachute: A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters and Career-Changers. This book is great because it gets you thinking about what job is right for YOU and what kind of job is a good match for your strengths and abilities. This book is filled with fun-type exercises that stretch the imagination in a very playful manner and help you determine which line of work you are best suited for. The exercises are very low-pressure, with lots of variety. Highly recommended.

Go through classified ads. Circle or highlight advertised jobs that appeal to you. Then look for words or phrases specific to the job or to a certain line of work and list them in your job search notebook. This is also a good time to record contact information in the notebook. (See the “Find a job: search want ads/on-line” goal in this curriculum guide.)

Read newspaper articles about companies and employment trends in the area. You can practice oral reading exercises with these stories, often found in the business section of the newspaper. Listen to your tutor read aloud first – maybe one paragraph at a time – and then you read aloud the same passage. Choose stories of interest and save them in the job search notebook.

Review job-related manuals, exam review books. If you are interested in a promotion at your current job, see if you can bring a copy of the job manual to your tutoring session. Or perhaps you need to take a test for a position that would pay more, or need to pass a civil service-type exam (with a city or school district or other large entity). You can bring the manual to the tutoring session and, together, work the lesson around it. The library also has several career exam books so check the shelves and study these books together.

Create a goal collage. Using magazines, cut out pictures reflecting your field of interest or maybe even your dream job. Create a collage and together write a story based on it. Or you can just cut out one or two pictures, paste them to a cardboard backing, and do a language-experience story (you tell the story while your tutor writes it down) based on the images.

Review job descriptions. It is important to be able to translate your current work experience and strengths into the requirements of a new job description. Brainstorm personal strengths and then translate them into the requirements listed in a job description or want ad. For example, if you work a lot with the public, and feel this is a personal strength, then you can confidently apply for many customer service positions. If you are good with processing numbers into workable documents, then you can perhaps work in inventory control, accounts payable or

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receivable or data entry. Be open to exploring your strengths and weaknesses and translate the strengths into skills that will benefit a company.

Read a company's public relations materials. If you're interested in a particular company, or perhaps several, visit the company website or pick up brochures (sometimes the Chamber of Commerce has these) and do some research. Highlight or take notes on the important parts. Knowledge of the company makes you a better job candidate.

Writing Practice

Brainstorm. Together you can create a Mind Map or do a Language Experience Activity while answering these questions: What job do I want? What are my strengths? What do I need to improve?

Filling out applications. Collect application forms or find them on-line. Practice filling them out and save your best responses in your job search notebook so you can plug them into future applications. Job applications typically ask for the following information:

- Date
- Legal name
- Address
- Phone number
- Position for which you are applying
- If you want part time or full time work
- Names and addresses of all the companies for whom you have worked in the last ten years
- Positions held
- Dates worked
- Description of your job duties
- Reason for leaving
- Education
- Organizations to which you belong

Writing letters. Practice writing business letters and cover letters by using your imagination and writing a letter to your "ideal" employer. The more ridiculous, the better. However, always include the date, contact name, where you found the job or how you were referred, the name of the position and ask for an interview. Be sure to include your name and phone number or the best way they can contact you. Later on, you can write a serious letter.

Games & Activities

Word Search. The tutor lists several job-related words at the top or bottom of a page and "hides" them in what appears as a random block of text, approx. 12 letters across (top and bottom) and 12 letters down (left and right borders), and filled out so that all spaces within this

box are filled (this number may change depending on the number of words and the student's level). The student's job is to locate these words, which may appear horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. This is a flexible rule. The two may agree to limit it to a horizontal or horizontal and vertical search. Go to <http://www.armoredpenguin.com/wordsearch/> or Google "free word search" to find websites that will help you make word searches with the words you want.

Crossword Puzzles. Again, using job-related terms, the tutor designs a simple crossword puzzle, using lists of definitions, similar to a typical crossword puzzle (one list for words entered down and another for those entered across). The answers will be listed on a separate sheet. It should be difficult enough to be challenging, but simple enough that you can fill in every box. The idea is to enjoy it and build confidence and not produce frustration. These can even be the same words used in a Word Search. Go to <http://www.puzzle-maker.com/CW/> or Google "free crossword puzzle" to find websites that will help you make your own crossword puzzles with the words and clues that you want.

Role-playing an interview situation. Both of you can act as if this were an actual interview by getting dressed in the appropriate attire for the particular position being sought. A list of questions (and answers) can be prepared beforehand, then the tutor can "interview" you asking those very questions. Afterward, you can switch places, and with the tutor taking on the role of job seeker. This will give you both the chance to experience a little what it's like being on the other side of the desk. The exercise can last 5-15 minutes, after which you can discuss your feelings about the interview and how it might be improved. (See the "Interview for a job" goal in this curriculum guide.)

Matching flashcards. This can be very handy when reviewing for a promotional test. Write job-related terms on flashcards. On separate cards, write the definitions of those terms. Use at least a dozen or more words. Mix them up really well. Lay the terms upside down on the table. Spread the definitions face up over the table top. Start with 10 poker chips or checker pieces then pulls a "job-term" card from the stack and match it with the correct definition. For every correct answer, you receive an additional chip or checker piece. For a wrong answer, a piece is lost. When you successfully find the definitions for all the words, you win the game.

Real World Practice

- Visit the local office of the Employment Development Department (E.D.D.), speak with a job counselor. Browse and note posted job ads.
- Attend a workshop on job seeking. Ask the E.D.D., the local library, the Chamber of Commerce, the adult school or the Community College if they offer any of these on topics like resume writing, interviewing, etc.
- Visit an employment agency and fill out an application form.
- Write a cover letter addressed to a potential employer. Mail this along with a resume to that employer and monitor your responses. (See the "Write a resume" goal in this curriculum guide.)

- There are many places to practice career search and networking. Consider going together to the following places:
 - Toastmasters. This is a non-profit club whose purpose is to develop public speaking ability among its members. They can be found in many cities.
 - Local service-oriented organizations such as Kiwanis, Lions Club, Soroptimist, Rotary, etc.
 - YMCA/YWCA
 - You could also interview a personnel representative or a job coach at a local college, or a recruiter for an employment agency

Independent Practice/Homework Ideas

- Practice answering interview questions in front of a mirror
- Maintain a notebook of names and phone numbers of potential employers, make regular entries.
- Go online and browse the websites of local cities and companies for job openings
- Have lunch or coffee with a person already working in the field or position that you aspire towards. Pump him/her with questions about the qualifications for the job and requirements to perform well. Let the person relate his/her favorite and worst experiences in that job.

Milestones

- ◆ ***Initial Effort*** – You are able to identify the job being sought and also list the strengths you possess that may qualify you for the job. You have developed a realistic timetable within which to accomplish this goal. You can identify a few companies you would like to work for and some individuals you can cite as “contacts” in such companies or businesses. You become more and more open to sharing your vision and are willing to work during the tutoring session to identify the tasks that need to be accomplished to meet the goal.
- ◆ ***Making Progress*** – You have overcome the initial fear of taking concrete actions to apply for that job. You have prepared a resume, are able to fill out an application, and have a list of contacts in the working world who may be able to help you. You may have taken a test or two for a new job or promotion. You are able to verbally describe your strengths or weaknesses as an employee. You have made phone calls to inquire about possible positions. You have ventured into the field, filling out applications, submitting resumes, and/or interviewing with potential employers.
- ◆ ***Accomplished*** – You have been hired at a new job or have obtained a promotion at your present place of employment. You should experience a high degree of achievement at this final stage and it is time to celebrate with champagne and a big cake!

Contributors' Biographies

Sal Morano. Sal holds a Masters in Library and Information Science (MLIS) from San Jose State. He has worked with the Corona Public Library Adult Literacy Program for 15 years, starting as a literacy assistant before becoming its program coordinator. He is a tutor trainer and maintains the literacy resources collection in Corona. He also serves library patrons as an adult and children's reference desk librarian.

Michele McGovern-Ruhe. Michele holds a masters degree in Adult Education with an emphasis in Career Guidance and Counseling. She has 20+ years experience with job training curriculum development for federal, state and local agencies. She has been a tutor and instructor (basic skills, G.E.D. PREP) for the Corona Public Library Adult Literacy Program since 2007.