

# **Instructor's Guide**

**for**

## ***Barriers to Employment Success Video***

### **Overview**

Whether they are looking for a job, or working to keep the one they have, your students are bound to face obstacles. Maybe they don't have a professional resume or reliable transportation. Maybe they lack the education or experience to advance. Or maybe they feel too stressed or too angry about their lost job to go out and look for a new one. There are literally hundreds of different barriers that job seekers face when looking for work, and many of these barriers can carry over into their new jobs once they're employed.

Students facing employment barriers must learn to take charge of their lives and their careers and make a plan for their own success. This video is designed to help them identify their specific barriers and set goals to overcome them.

The video discusses the five categories of employment barriers that people encounter most frequently. They include Personal and Financial Barriers, Emotional and Physical Barriers, Career Decision-Making and Planning Barriers, Job Seeking Knowledge Barriers, and Education and Training Barriers. While each of these categories is discussed separately, be aware that students may face multiple barriers across many categories and that those barriers will have a direct impact on each other as well. Also be aware that not all barriers will apply to all students. Encourage students to focus on the issues most relevant to their situation.

The *Barriers to Employment Success Video* is designed to be used as either a companion to the *Overcoming Barriers to Employment Success* workbook or as a stand-alone product. In addition, the DVD content corresponds directly to the *Barriers to Employment Success Inventory* assessment (*BESI*). If you are planning to administer the assessment, you should do so before students watch the video. Once you have administered the *BESI*, students can watch the video and/or proceed through the workbook concentrating on their most pressing barriers.

### **Presentation Suggestions**

Begin by asking students about their difficulties in finding work and/or keeping a job? What barriers have they faced? Are they physical barriers (not having reliable transportation or childcare) or emotional barriers (feelings of anger or depression)? Do they come from within (lack of self-confidence or negative attitude) or without (no jobs

in the area)? Try to get a sense of what the most common barriers are. Be aware that students may have personal issues that they do not wish to share or discuss. Be sensitive to students' privacy, and be willing to share any difficulties you have had finding or keeping work in the past.

Point out that almost anyone who looks for work faces some kind of obstacle. The key is to identify barriers that are of highest concern and then make a plan to overcome them. Also tell students that some barriers are more easily overcome than others and that their plans to overcome employment barriers will likely include short- and long-term goals. There are very few easy fixes.

When you feel students have begun thinking about these issues, give them the **Anticipation Quiz** to complete prior to watching the video. If you wish, allow the students to state their answers and discuss them.

Show the video. Encourage students to take notes or to make changes to the answers they put down for the Anticipation Quiz while watching the video.

At the conclusion of the video, ask students to discuss any changes they made to their answers on the Anticipation Quiz as a result of information they learned. Follow up this discussion with the **Activities**.

Use the **Discussion Questions** to request oral or written responses from students or assign the questions as homework essays.

Give the **Quick Quiz** at the conclusion of class and correct the quizzes as a group. Assign the **Homework Option**, if desired.

### **Anticipation Quiz**

**Directions:** Answer these questions as completely as possible. You may revise your answers as you watch the video.

1. What are some personal barriers that might need to be addressed even before you start looking for a job?
2. What are some signs that your emotions may be a barrier to employment?
3. List three things you should consider when researching and planning your next career move.
4. What are the two most-effective job search strategies?
5. What are some ways to pay for additional education and training?

### **Answer Key**

1. Food and clothing. A clean, safe place to live. Reliable transportation. Childcare. (Answers may vary.)

2. Sudden outbursts of anger. Feelings of hopelessness. A lack of energy. Being easily frustrated. Experiencing undue stress. (Answers may vary.)
3. Interests. Skills. Values. Goals. Education required. Job outlook. (Answers may vary.)
4. Contacting employers directly and networking.
5. State and federal financial aid. Scholarships. Employer reimbursement. Military student aid. Bank loans. (Answers may vary.)

## **Activities**

### **Activity #1**

**Title:** Getting Your Priorities in Order

**Format:** Individual

**Time:** 20-30 minutes

**Materials:** Worksheet, pen

**Procedure:**

1. Use the barriers checklist worksheet provided with this guide to help students identify their most pressing barriers. First, students should circle any barriers that apply to their current situation. Then they should use the spaces provided to rank those barriers from *most critical* to *least critical* (with 1 being the most critical).
2. Once students have finished ranking, have them brainstorm ways to overcome their five most critical barriers using the spaces provided. If students feel comfortable sharing their information, encourage them to work in teams to generate solutions.

### **Activity #2**

**Title:** The Monthly Budget

**Format:** Individual

**Time:** 20-30 minutes

**Materials:** Worksheet, pen

**Procedure:**

1. Using the monthly budget worksheet included with this study guide, have students calculate their total monthly expenses as well as the required hourly income for meeting those expenses.
2. When they are finished, instruct students to go back through their budgets and identify three places where they can reduce expenses. Have them write these strategies down.
3. If there is time, have students break into pairs to go over their budgets and discuss additional reductions that can be made.

### **Activity #3**

**Title:** Setting Goals

**Format:** Individual

**Time:** 20-30 minutes

**Materials:** Worksheet, pen

**Procedure:**

1. Use the goal setting worksheet provided with this guide to help students set both short-term and long-term career goals. Remind students that short-term goals are often simple but that they build up to long-term goals.
2. When they are finished, instruct students to go back through their list of goals. Do the short-term goals lead up to the long-term ones? If not, are there additional steps (short-term goals) required to reach the long-term goals?
3. Provide students with another blank copy of the worksheet and encourage them to try this exercise again next week. Have them consider how one's goals change with time.

#### **Activity #4**

**Title:** Interview Swap

**Format:** Pairs

**Time:** 20-25 minutes

**Materials:** List of common interview questions.

**Procedure:**

1. As a whole group, generate a list of the interview questions they are most commonly asked or that they most often struggle with. Put that list on the board or overhead. Several common questions are provided below:
  - What do you see yourself doing five years from now?
  - Why do you want to work for our company?
  - What do you consider to be your greatest strengths?
  - What are your weaknesses?
  - How would you describe yourself?
  - Why should I hire you?
  - What do you think it takes to be successful in a company like ours?
  - If you were hiring someone for this position, what qualities would you look for?
  - How do you work under pressure?
  - What have you learned from your mistakes?
  - Are you willing to relocate?
  - Are you willing to travel?
  - How much do you expect to be paid?
2. Have each student choose three questions that they believe are the *most* difficult to answer. Break them into pairs. Students should take turns asking each other the questions they've chosen. After each question, encourage the "interviewer" to evaluate the response.
3. When students have completed their "interviews," come back together as a class and take a poll to see what the most difficult question to answer was. Then try to come up with an effective response as a class.

## **Discussion Questions**

1. Many barriers are ultimately related to money. What impact do financial problems and concerns have on other barriers? What steps can you take to make sure money problems don't make other barriers worse or stand in the way of your getting or keeping a job?
2. What role does attitude play in both creating and overcoming barriers to employment success? How can a negative attitude impact your job search or your ability to keep a job? What strategies can you think of for staying positive, even when you are unemployed?
3. What are the characteristics of a good support network? What can a support network do for you/help you with? What kinds of people would you want in your support network? Who would you *not* want? Why?
4. What difficulties have you had in finding a job? Is it harder to write a resume or fill out an application? Do you have difficulty getting job leads? Do you struggle during interviews? Discuss as a class what the most difficult aspects of the job search are and see if there is a consensus. Then take some time to discuss strategies for overcoming the most troublesome job search barriers.
5. What is the value of additional education and training? What is the cost? Are the potential payoffs worth the cost? Why or why not?

## **Quick Quiz**

**Note:** You may read these questions out loud, allowing time for students to respond, or copy and hand this out as a written exercise.

**Directions:** Indicate whether each statement is true or false, according to the video.

1. You should lie about a criminal history on an application or in an interview so that you aren't screened out.
2. Temporary jobs can provide you with valuable experience and supplemental income while looking for work.
3. You don't have to worry about finding housing, transportation, or childcare until you get a job.
4. All barriers to employment come from factors outside of us that we can't control.
5. Healthy eating habits and daily exercise can help to combat stress.
6. Substance abuse problems can affect your career without you even realizing it.
7. The last step in the career decision-making process is to take action.
8. Most people get their jobs by answering want ads.
9. There is really nothing you can do to prepare for an interview.

10. Ninety percent of the fastest-growing jobs require some kind of postsecondary education and training.

**Answer Key**

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|----------|----------|
| 1. False | 6. True  |
| 2. True  | 7. False |
| 3. False | 8. False |
| 4. False | 9. False |
| 5. True  | 10. True |

**Homework Option**

You can't make good career decisions if you don't have good information. Fortunately there is a great deal of career information available online and in reference material at the local library.

Ask students to choose one job that they are interested in applying for and that they've never worked at previously. Tell students that they should research that job using the online and print resources below. Students should be sure to research and record the earnings, job outlook, education and training required, common work tasks, work environment, and number of openings. Have each student prepare to give a brief (1-2 minute) report on the jobs they researched for the following class.

Resources for career research:

- *Occupational Outlook Handbook*: [www.bls.gov/OCO/](http://www.bls.gov/OCO/).
- *O\*NET Dictionary of Occupational Titles*: <http://online.onetcenter.org/>

## Barriers Checklist

In the chart below, check any barriers that apply to you. Then use middle column to rank the barriers you checked from most to least critical (with 1 being *most* critical). Finally, use the last column to brainstorm one possible solution for overcoming each barrier.

Barrier	Rank	Suggestions for Overcoming
I don't have reliable transportation.		
I need a place to live.		
I don't have adequate childcare.		
I don't know government agencies that can help.		
I don't have enough money to live on.		
I don't know how to manage my money.		
I need assistance with health problems.		
I have problems controlling my anger.		
I feel depressed most of the time.		
I have low self-esteem.		
I lack the energy and drive to find a job.		
I have a substance abuse problem.		
I am too stressed to find a job.		
I lack a sense of purpose or direction.		
I don't have any goals.		
I don't know enough about the jobs available.		
I don't know how to apply my interests to jobs.		
I don't know how to make career decisions.		
I don't know how to find job leads.		
I don't know how to write a good resume.		
I don't know how to interview for a job.		
I don't see the point in getting more education.		
I can't afford to go back to school.		
I don't have a plan for my education or my future.		

## My Monthly Budget

*Monthly Expenses*

*Amount Paid*

### Living Expenses

Mortgage/Rent	\$ _____
Electricity/Gas	\$ _____
Water	\$ _____
Telephone	\$ _____
Cable	\$ _____
Internet service	\$ _____
Sewage	\$ _____
Sanitation	\$ _____
Taxes	\$ _____
Household repairs/upkeep	\$ _____

### Transportation Expenses

Bus/train/taxi fare	\$ _____
Car payment/rental	\$ _____
Gasoline	\$ _____
Parking	\$ _____
Car repairs	\$ _____

### Entertainment Expenses

Sporting events	\$ _____
Movies	\$ _____
Eating out	\$ _____
Vacations	\$ _____
Babysitters	\$ _____
Other entertainment	\$ _____

### Medical expenses

Medical expenses	\$ _____
Dental expenses	\$ _____
Prescriptions	\$ _____

### Insurance

Life insurance	\$ _____
Health insurance	\$ _____
Auto insurance	\$ _____
Homeowners/Renters insurance	\$ _____



**Food and Clothes**

Grocery expenses \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Clothes \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Laundering services \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Family Expenses**

Child care \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Toys/games/activities \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Child support payments \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
School tuition/supplies \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Pet care \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Other Debt**

Other loan payments \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Credit card interest \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**Miscellaneous Expenses**

Higher education costs \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
News/Magazine subscriptions \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Charities \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
Club/Association Fees \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**TOTAL MONTHLY EXPENSES** \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**REQUIRED HOURLY INCOME** \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
**(TOTAL EXPENSES/173)**

**3 Ways I Can Reduce Expenses**

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## **Goal Setting Worksheet**

In the spaces below, write down what you would like to accomplish in the timeframe given. Be sure your goals are realistic but positive.

### **Today's Goals**

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### **Tomorrow's Goals**

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### **This Week's Goals**

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### **This Month's Goals**

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### **This Year's Goals**

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### **Five-Year Goals**

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