

Transition to Work and Self Sufficiency Video Series

Instructor's Guide for ***The Job Search***

Overview

When you are looking for a job, you cannot afford to be passive, simply sending out your resume or posting it online in the hopes that an employer will find you and come calling. You have to actively pursue positions you are interested in by generating and following up on job leads. That means using all of the resources you have at your disposal, from online job sites to job placement programs. But even more importantly, it means building a network of contacts that can offer you those leads and contacting employers directly to get those leads yourself.

This is important. By only going after openings that have been announced and advertised, you ignore two-thirds of the actual jobs that are available. You also end up competing with millions of applicants. Instead, your time is more effectively spent finding the jobs that haven't even been formally announced yet, and there are time-tested strategies for doing just that.

This video helps students understand the traditional and not-so traditional job search methods, and the strengths and weaknesses of each. It also addresses the role that applications play in the job search process and offers strategies for filling them out so as not to get *screened* out. The video tracks the progress of four job seekers—Tanya, Jack, Karen, and Anthony—as they move through these steps, and students should be encouraged to discuss their own experiences with finding work. Feel free to pause the video for activities and discussion as your own schedule dictates.

Presentation Suggestions

Begin by asking students about their past successes and failures at finding jobs. What strategies have they used? Which ones have turned out to be most effective? How did they find the last job they worked at? Consider making a list of job search strategies on the board or overhead. You can tally the class responses to see which method was most and least effective. Tell students that they should use multiple job search strategies, but that they should focus on those that have been proven to be most effective—strategies that the video will discuss in more detail.

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 the most effective methods for finding a job?
2. How do you build a network of contacts?
3. What role do job applications play in the hiring process?
4. What percentage of jobs openings are never even advertised?

Answer Key

1. Contacting employers directly and using your network to generate job leads.
2. Start with friends and family. Ask each friend or family member if they know of two people who might have job leads or information. Then ask those two people if they know of two more people and so on. Also be sure to ask colleagues, alumni, past teachers, and people in social or religious groups you belong to.
3. Job applications are designed to screen applicants out by asking about potential liabilities. Employers use them to reduce the number of applicants they want to interview for a position.
4. About 65 percent.

Activities

Activity #1

Title: Calling All Employers

Format: Individual, pairs

Time: 20-30 minutes

Materials: Worksheet, pen

Procedure:

1. It's not always efficient to visit every employer you would like to interview with in person. Often it can be just as effective to contact them by phone. Doing so gives you a chance to present your skills and ask for an interview, plus you can make several more contacts a day this way. However, it can help to have a phone script that you follow so that you can remember what information to include.
2. Hand out a copy of the phone script worksheet included with this guide. Go through the example with the class; then have students create their own phone script. Remind them that they will probably only have a minute or so to present their case to an employer, so they need to be brief and to the point.
3. When students have finished their scripts, break them into pairs. Assign one member of each pair the role of *employer* and the other the role of *job-seeker*. Have students practice "cold calling" employers and asking about openings, using their phone scripts as guides. Give them a chance to reverse the roles. If there is time, come back together as a class and discuss what worked and what didn't.

Activity #2

Title: Make Your Own Business Card

Format: Individual

Time: 10-15 minutes

Materials: Pen, 3 x 5 index cards

Procedure:

1. Business cards can be useful tools when networking or when contacting employers. As a class, discuss what kinds of information are usually found on business cards. If anyone has examples in their purse or wallet, encourage him or her to share.
2. Now have students design their own business card that they will use for networking and for calling on employers. Cards should include their name, contact information (including phone and email), and current place of business (if applicable) on one side. The other side should give a sense of what they do and/or the kind of job they are looking for. This could include work and education experience, position desired, any job-related skills or positive traits.
3. Have students come together in groups of three to critique each other's cards, checking for clarity, spelling, and grammar.
4. If they have access to a computer, encourage students to experiment with fonts, logos, graphics, and other design elements to make their cards look professional.

5. Finally, hand out a list of local photocopy and printing places that print customized business cards and encourage students to get theirs professionally printed.

Discussion Questions

1. What are the advantages and disadvantages of posting your resume online at a site like Monster? What luck have you had with these job sites in the past? How much time should you spend answering want ads and looking for jobs online?
2. What makes up a network? How is a network created and maintained? How do you use your network to find job leads? What tools are available to help you manage your network?
3. How can you avoid getting screened out by the application process? What questions can be difficult to address and how do you do so effectively? What should you take with you to help fill out an application?

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. Most colleges and universities have career offices that can help alumni with employment issues.
2. The majority of jobs are found by using online job posting sites.
3. The most important aspect of a job search is finding jobs before they are even advertised.
4. If an application asks about pay desired, you should write “negotiable.”
5. If employers don't have an advertised job opening it means they are not hiring.
6. Job applications are designed to screen out unqualified applicants.
7. You should never post your resume to a site that charges you to do.
8. Most employers hire from within or based on referrals from trusted sources.

Answer Key

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

Homework Option

Have students spend the time before next class generating job leads. Tell them that they are responsible for coming to the next class with a list of 20 people in their network that they can contact about possible job leads as well as 10 potential employers they plan to contact directly to ask about openings.

Phone Script

Contacting employers by phone can be difficult, but it often results in a job lead or even an interview. It can be easier if you have a phone script to follow when you make each call. Following is a sample conversation of a job seeker asking an employer for an interview:

Job Seeker: "Hello, my name is May Baker and I was wondering if you currently had any open administrative assistant positions in your office. I have two years of experience as a legal secretary. I am proficient in customer care, word processing, and database management. I also have an associate's degree in business administration. Would it be possible for us to meet this week to discuss possible job openings?"

Employer: "Sorry, we just don't have any openings at this time."

Job Seeker: "I understand. But I would still like to speak with you about any future openings. Would it be possible to schedule an informational interview? Or can you give me the names of other employers who might be interested in a person with my skills?"

Use the worksheet below to create a basic phone script for contacting employers. Be aware that this is only a basic outline, and that you will change your presentation to fit every occasion.

Greeting and introduction: _____

Reason for call: _____

Briefly recount most pertinent work experience, education, and skills: _____

Closing (ask for an interview): _____
