

## SO YOU'RE LOOKING FOR A JOB

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The objective of this lesson is to provide you some processes to use when entering the work force or changing your current employment. Everyone has some unique and positive skills. We often do not realize all the skills we have, and, therefore, we do not always present ourselves in the most positive manner. If you need to consider what your talents and skills are, review "Maximizing Your Potential" (WLG/WL 222).

The first process when you seek employment is to decide on such items as:

1. What am I really interested in doing?
2. Do I have the training required?
3. What are the environmental considerations?
4. What is the minimum pay I will accept?
5. Do I need to have insurance/retirement benefits from the job?
6. What days and hours am I available to work?
7. Do I have transportation?

On the member's guide there is a form for you to complete.

Interests	Skill Level	Training Have/ Needed	Environment I Want to Work in	Pay Required	Benefits Required
Cooking	Excellent	Have	Inside	\$6/hr	Health
Baking	Excellent	Have	No lifting		Soc. Security
Chef	Average	Need	Dust-free		
Clerk	Good	Have	No walking		
Accounting	Average	Need	No climbing		

Hours I want to work = Evening or nights

I do have \_\_\_\_\_ I do not have \_\_\_\_\_ transportation.

You have now identified your interests, as well as how employment should fit into your family situation. You have decided on the minimum pay and benefits you require. Now you are ready to begin.

### STEP 1: What Do I Look For?

Review the items on the interest and skills list and decide if you want to seek immediate employment in an area in which you have good to excellent skills, or if you want to go for training to upgrade your skills in other areas. This is the first major decision.

Let's decide that we do not want to seek additional training, but to go immediately into the work force. We select cooking/baking as an area in which we want to find employment.

### STEP 2: Where Do I Look?

A. Make a list of places in your area that employ cooks and bakers. The list might read as follows:

- 1) Public/private schools
- 2) Community and state colleges
- 3) Bakeries
- 4) Restaurants
- 5) Private country clubs
- 6) Hospitals
- 7) Large businesses/industries having their own food service
- 8) Catering services
- 9) Large commercial bakeries
- 10) My own business

B. How do I find out what else is available in my area?

- \* Newspaper want ads
- \* Employment agency
- \* Contact the business directly
- \* Bulletin boards at local supermarkets
- \* Ask friends and family
- \* Review telephone book ads and make a list of businesses/companies that may have positions for which you are qualified

C. You need to make a contact in person, by phone, or by letter to see if the business is hiring or has any vacancies.

### STEP 3: Obtaining an Application Form

Once you have located a business that is hiring, the next step is obtaining an application form. The following are ways you may obtain an application form:

A. Call the business and ask how you may obtain an



George Palatino, Instructor, Central High School, School Street, Hometown, WV 80034

Dan's Lawn Mowing Service, Dan Miller, 15 Green Grass Street, Hometown, WV 80034 (Regular customer of my lawn mower repair service.)

*As a club activity, share your application with someone. Discuss what could be done to improve the appearance of the application.*

### **STEP 5: The Interview**

The interview is your opportunity to impress the employer face-to-face. By following these helpful hints, you will be sure to give a good impression of yourself.

- A. *Be Prompt:* Arrive 15 minutes before your interview is scheduled to begin.
- B. *Be Prepared:* Take proper identification and your social security card with you to the interview. Be able to answer the following: Why do you want the job, and why do you think you should be hired? Be confident of your skills. Take something with you that demonstrates your skills, if applicable.
- C. *Watch Your Appearance*  
*Dress:* Dress appropriately for the interview. You do not have to wear your Sunday best, but you should try to present a neat and clean appearance.  
  
*Actions During the Interview:*
  1. Do not chew gum or eat during the interview.
  2. Do not smoke during or before your interview.
  3. Use Sir or Madam and Mr. or Ms. during the interview.
  4. Smile.
  5. Try to relax and act natural.
  6. Ask questions about the job.
  7. Thank the employer for his/her time.
- D. *Dialect:* It is unfair that a person's competence is sometimes judged on the way he/she speaks. During an interview, you should use proper or standard English. Stay clear of slang words and regional sayings.

\*Immediately after the interview, you should write a follow-up letter, thanking the employer for his/her time.

\*If you do not hear from the employer, call and ask if the position has been filled.

### **SAMPLE FOLLOW-UP LETTER TO AN INTERVIEW**

Street Address  
City, State, ZIP Code

Date of Writing

Mr./Ms. Blank, Title (ex: manager)  
Sears, Roebuck & Co.  
Oaktown, WV 00000

Dear Mr./Ms. Blank:

It was a pleasure to visit with you and to meet the members of your staff. I was pleased with the opportunity to get a closer look at your organization and to hear of the many ventures being undertaken.

2nd paragraph--(See suggestions 1 and 2 below for possible applicable paragraphs.)

I was most impressed with your organization and handling of employees, especially in the area of quality control. As I understand, you will contact me within a month concerning further consideration. I look forward to hearing from you. Thank you again for the interview.

Sincerely,

(Handwritten signature)  
Your name typed

1. Paragraph to add information not covered in the interview: (In reviewing the interview, I was aware that we did not discuss the area of...I failed to mention that my summer employment provided an opportunity for development of some expertise in the...aspect...of)
2. Paragraph to cover information unsatisfactorily presented in the interview: (In reviewing the interview, I feel that I did not accurately answer your question about travel, schedule requirements, etc...I may have conveyed hesitancy about (travel or extra working hours or other special considerations). Your later explanations and descriptions of the job revealed to me the fact that I would find the situations mentioned to be no real obstacle to me...)

(Taken from the 1992-1993 West Virginia University Placement Manual, provided by the WVU Career Services Center.)

Club Activity:

A. Do the practice interview with a partner.

B. As an alternate activity, do a practice interview in front of the entire group.

Practice Interview

BOSS: Hello, (name). How are you today? Come in and sit down.

INTERVIEWEE: \_\_\_\_\_

BOSS: What position did you want to talk to me about?

INTERVIEWEE: \_\_\_\_\_

BOSS: Now, tell me something about yourself. What do you feel are your weaknesses and strengths?

INTERVIEWEE: \_\_\_\_\_

BOSS: Tell me, why do you want to work for this company?

INTERVIEWEE: \_\_\_\_\_

BOSS: Why do you think I should hire you for this position?

INTERVIEWEE: \_\_\_\_\_

BOSS: Have you ever done this kind of work before? Tell me something about your previous work experience. Where did you work? What did you do? What was your salary? Why did you leave?

INTERVIEWEE: \_\_\_\_\_

BOSS: Are you a hard worker?

INTERVIEWEE: \_\_\_\_\_

BOSS: Do you follow instructions well?

INTERVIEWEE: \_\_\_\_\_

BOSS: What hours are you available to work? Are you willing to work overtime?

INTERVIEWEE: \_\_\_\_\_

BOSS: Do you have an expected salary range?

INTERVIEWEE: \_\_\_\_\_

BOSS: Is there anything you feel may interfere with your ability to do this job?

INTERVIEWEE: \_\_\_\_\_

BOSS: Do you have any questions? Is there anything else you would like to tell me?

INTERVIEWEE: \_\_\_\_\_

BOSS: If you are chosen for the position, I expect you to be on time, work hard, do the work well, get along with others, be honest and cheerful, and be kind to customers. I don't like a "chip on the shoulder," laziness, arguing, or an "I-don't-care" attitude. Also, you will be expected to keep all personal problems at home. Are you still interested in the job?

INTERVIEWEE: \_\_\_\_\_

C. Now go over the Rating Sheet for the practice interview in the Member's Guide.

(Practice Interview provided by Pennsylvania State University Extension Service.)

**STEP 5: What Do I Do Now?**

So you got the job! Congratulations!! Now you have the opportunity to become the very best employee the business has ever had. That is called job retention. Some of the important skills related to job retention are:

- \*Being on time or ahead of time
- \*Having a cheerful, positive attitude
- \*Wearing clean, neat clothing appropriate for the role
- \*Listening carefully to all instructions and following each one
- \*Asking questions to clarify your understanding of the instructions
- \*Working diligently and taking only the allowed breaks
- \*Being flexible to do another task cheerfully or to do things differently

The job went to someone else! **Don't get discouraged!!** Review the situation; see what you could do differently. Realize that there may have been several applicants who were more experienced or who had greater skills than you. **KEEP TRYING!!!** In today's tight job market it is not unusual for a person to submit over 100 applications before finding employment.

**REMEMBER! When you are applying for a job, you are selling your skills and personality to the potential employer. You are your own best sales person. Present yourself in a fair, open, and positive manner.**

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