

2011

Hostetler Fontaine & Associates



Job Ready

Job Development



A comprehensive vocational rehabilitation and job development program to facilitate bringing disadvantaged and injured workers to a job-ready status.

2011_{HFA}

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A Guide to Successfully Prepare Injured Workers Return to Employment

Quick Reference Table

Topic	Illegal Questions	Legal Questions
National Origin/ Citizenship	<p>Are you a U.S. Citizen?</p> <p>Where were you/your parents born?</p> <p>What is your native tongue?</p>	<p>Are you authorized to work in the United States?</p> <p>What languages do you read, speak, or write fluently? (This question is okay, as long as this ability is relevant to the performance of the job.)</p>
Age	<p>How old are you?</p> <p>When is your birth date?</p> <p>When did you graduate from high school?</p>	<p>Are you over the age of 18?</p>
Disabilities	<p>Do you have any disabilities?</p> <p>Please complete the following medical history.</p> <p>Have you had any recent or past illnesses or operations? If yes, list and give dates.</p> <p>What was the date of your last physical exam?</p> <p>How's your family health? When did you lose your eyesight? How?</p> <p>Do you need an accommodation to perform the job? (Can be asked only after a job offer is made)</p> <p>Have you ever received workers' compensation benefits?</p>	<p>Based on the job description, are you able to perform the essential functions of this job?</p> <p>Can you demonstrate how you would perform the following job-related functions?</p> <p>Are you willing to complete a medical exam after we've made you a job offer?</p> <p>Do you understand that any offer of employment is conditional based on the results of a medical exam?</p>
Arrest Record	<p>Have you ever been arrested?</p>	<p>Have you ever been convicted of _____? (The crime named should be reasonably related to the performance of the job in question.)</p>
Personal	<p>How tall are you?</p> <p>How much do you weigh?</p> <p>How much weight can you lift?</p>	<p>Are you able to lift a 50-pound weight and carry it 100 yards, as this is part of the job? (Questions about height and weight are not acceptable unless minimum standards are essential to the safe performance of the job.)</p>

Many employers request that each applicant fill out a form about race, sex, age, and other areas. These forms provide employers with statistical information required by the federal government. Completion of such forms should be optional and they should be returned to employers separately from applications. They should not contain any information that would identify you as the respondent; they should be completely anonymous, not simply confidential.

Some applications include statements authorizing the employers to conduct various types of investigations into your background. Applications often contain waivers of liability stating that you will not take action against anyone giving employers information about you. Despite this waiver, employers are still prohibited from knowingly providing false information about you that could adversely affect your chances of employment.

Job Interviewing



Some things may have changed about how you look for work, but how you conduct yourself in an interview has remained relatively the same. Despite your perfect resume or cover letter, you will most likely not be hired until you have had a successful interview and the employer decides you're the right person for the job. Being prepared to successfully answer the interviewer's questions will certainly influence your level of consideration for the job and may just give you that added consideration over the next candidate. You should enter each interview feeling confident and prepared, and expecting to face some difficult and sometimes challenging questions.

Exercise 4 - Interview Questions

In this section we will present you with a number of example questions that you might expect when interviewing for a particular job. We will review some popular articles published by national recruiting firms, the Careerbuilder® website, and job hunting literature from academic institutions of higher learning. We will also provide you with examples of some of the most commonly asked questions by hiring personnel today. Finally, we will practice answering traditional and situational questions most commonly asked by hiring managers.

1. *What to Expect*

An interview is typically structured to have a beginning, middle and end. It is during those stages the employer will begin to become familiar with you by noting your attire, presentation, and communication style.

2. *Non-Verbal Communication*

Attitude, more so than job knowledge, is many times the most important factor that search panels look for when considering potential candidates. Interviewers are looking for not only someone who has specific skills, but someone that will be easy to work with.

3. *General Questions*

Traditional interviewing questions focus on getting factual information from the candidate. This includes their work experience, social activities, qualifications, trainings, and additional special skills.

4. *Behavioral and Situational Questions*

Situational or behavioral interviewing requires a candidate to describe situations or past behaviors that demonstrate specific competencies that the employer has determined are necessary for success in that position or organization.

5. *Difficult Questions*

Coming prepared to answer difficult questions is an important component of job interviewing. You should be prepared to defend your weaknesses, constructively address any problems with previous employers, and properly disclose salary history to maintain your candidacy.

6. *Asking Questions*

Just as the interviewer wants to know if you are right for the job, you want to know if the position is right for you. This is your opportunity to find out as many specifics about the job, the company, its culture, and the future of the organization as you can.



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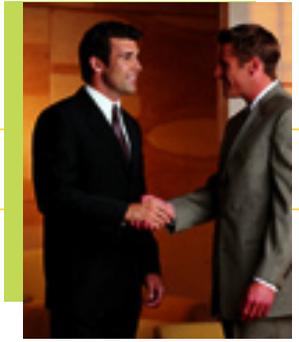


Interviewing • Resume Creation • Computer Training • Personal Presentation • Cover Letters • Follow Up • Job Acceptance

Overview

The mission of Vocational Rehabilitation is to assist and empower eligible individuals with disabilities to achieve and maintain meaningful employment. A Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor will work individually with the client to provide support and assistance as he/she works toward reaching their job goal. When you are ready for work, you and your counselor will determine what services may be needed to obtain a job. This kit is designed to help you to successfully prepare to re-enter the workforce by achieving job-ready status.

Labor Markets



Current Employment Trends

The employment market is ever-changing. Changes in technology transform the way we apply to jobs, get to work, and perform our job duties. New methods of applying to jobs, such as via email, electronic resume, and by website, are all new ways employers are accepting applicant information. Networking with friends, family, and ex-coworkers remain an important method in exploring new employment opportunities. Injured workers looking to re-enter the labor market are faced with new challenges in exploring employment. Becoming familiar with these new technologies and learning to adapt to them will allow you to remain competitive within your labor market. Seeking employment requires a dedicated, consistent and sustained effort that includes contacting, conversing, applying, interviewing, and following up with employers on a daily basis.

Exercise 1 - Introduction to Labor Markets

In this exercise, we will become familiar with your specific labor market area and identify local job development and placement resources that are available to improve your employability.

1. State Bureau of Labor Market Information

Becoming familiar with your local labor market's employment statistics can help you and your counselor form realistic job development goals and gain a better understanding of where labor is in demand.

2. Community Employment Resources

Local and State level agencies have programs to assist injured workers explore and return to employment. In this section we will provide you with contact information of the local agencies specific to your labor market area, and review the instructions on how to register for employment and placement services.

3. Identifying Employers

Identifying prospective employers who are not advertising employment openings can be a challenge. Many business directories are available to the public, and we will work together to help you become familiar with these resources. Examples include local area chamber of commerce business listings, online company directories, local yellow pages, and manufacturing business catalogs.

4. Application Procedures

The manner in which employers are accepting applications and resumes is evolving. Many employers are developing paperless application policies that require applicants email their resume or complete an online application electronically. This section will help familiarize you with new and old application procedures and how to best utilize them.

REVIEW SESSION WITH COUNSELOR

Successful job seekers take a focused approach to finding work that is centered, narrow, and strong.

Labor market studies also lets you know what jobs are open in your area and where to find them.

There are many resources that give company listings and facts about them. Use these lists to find out what is taking place in your desired line of work, as well as facts about employers.



Dressing for Success



A recent article in U.S.A. Today spoke about candidates interviewing for jobs showing up in jeans, sweat suits, and spiked heels or sneakers. Others chewed gum or showed up in wrinkled clothes.

Does it really make a difference how you dress and act? In many cases, it does. According to Dr. Randall Hansen of Stetson University, “dressing for success” is probably one of the most overused phrases in job-hunting, but also one of the most underutilized by job-seekers. In job-hunting, first impressions are critical. Remember, you are marketing yourself to a potential employer, and the first thing the employer sees when greeting you is your attire; thus, you must make every effort to have the proper attire for the type of job you are seeking. Will dressing properly get you the job? Of course not, but it will give you a competitive edge and a positive first impression.¹

Exercise 2 - Proper Attire

In this exercise, we will become familiar with general appearance guidelines that men and women should meet when applying for and interviewing for most jobs. It is important to remember when applying for jobs in person, one can never predict if they will be called in for an immediate interview. Job applicants must always be prepared and dressed for the “on-the-spot” interview. Make sure you present with:

1. Clean and pressed dress shirt/blouse, slacks, and polished conservative dress shoes
2. Well-groomed hairstyle
3. Cleaned and trimmed fingernails
4. Minimal cologne or perfume
5. No visible body piercing other than ear piercings for women
6. Fresh breath
7. No gum, candy, or other objects in your mouth
8. Minimal jewelry
9. No body odor
10. Additional copies of resume and cover letter
11. Writing instrument
12. Pad of paper for note taking

REVIEW SESSION WITH COUNSELOR

¹ Dr. Hansen is a professor of marketing in the School of Business Administration at Stetson University in DeLand, Florida. He is a published career expert and has been for the last ten years. He is co-author, with Katharine Hansen, of *Dynamic Cover Letters* and he has been an employer and consultant dealing with hiring and firing decisions for the past fifteen years.

Under most circumstances it is better to be overdressed than underdressed.

Research the company for which you are applying.

Contact a Human Resources representative and inquire about their dress policy.

Visit the company and see what workers are wearing before your interview.

Follow-Up Activity



Writing a thank-you letter after an interview doesn't just showcase a candidate's manners -- it can also make or break his or her chances of landing a job.

- Rosemary Haefner,
CareerBuilder.com

A survey in August 2005 by CareerBuilder.com found that nearly 15% of hiring managers would reject a job candidate who neglected to send a thank-you letter after the interview.

So few job applicants send thank-you notes that you automatically stand out if you do.

- Peter Vogt, CTJobs.com

Purpose

Follow-up contacts with employers can be written, by telephone, or in-person and are among the most crucial steps job seekers can make to influence a hiring decision. While some employers reward those who follow-up with further consideration, others do not even consider those candidates who fail to reiterate their interests by personal contact or correspondence. With the vast numbers of job seekers in the labor market, follow-ups have become even more critical in determining one's success in securing employment. Some general purposes of follow up activities are verifying receipt of resume, making additional contact to attempt to schedule an interview, thanking the interviewer for the time spent together, re-addressing selected qualifications and training, motivation to work, and demonstrates an interest in the next stages of the selection process.

Exercise 5 - Applying Follow-Up Methods

In this exercise, we will become familiar with the two main methods of follow up activity and when each method is best applied.

Follow-Up Call.

The follow up telephone call is primarily used to verify proper receipt of a resume or application. It serves the purpose of 1) showing interest that your credentials were received by the appropriate personnel, and 2) allows you the opportunity to speak with a hiring representative about your credentials.

Thank You Letter.

You should plan to send a thank you letter as soon after the interview as possible. To be most effective, it should arrive prior to the final hiring decision. A thank you letter should say much more than "thank you." Here are some of important points you may want to include:

1. Express Enthusiasm
2. Be Specific
3. Address Unresolved Points
4. Sincere and Personalized
5. Make a Positive and Lasting Impression

Extra Page:

Not used within booklet
Please Discard or Delete

Mock Interview



Mock interviews simulate actual interviewing conditions, providing experience with the interviewing process and developing interviewing skills. Mock interviews usually last 30 minutes, with the majority of the time allocated to the practice interview session. As with every skill you've ever learned, you have to learn the technique and then practice, practice, practice. A mock interview will not only help you perfect your technique, but it will also allow you to get valuable feedback and coaching on your performance.



Exercise 6 - Practice, Practice...

In this exercise we will conduct a real-life interview simulation. You should prepare as if you were interviewing for an actual job. You may wish to review previous handouts and sections of this job readiness kit prior to your interview. Remember that many employers use a multiple interview system that may include additional interviews with additional company representatives. Once the mock session is complete, we will discuss your performance and provide you with constructive feedback. We will also work together to practice your answers to some of the more difficult questions and schedule a second interview if necessary.

1. Preparation

During your mock interview, you will be evaluated on the following; Firm Handshake, Posture, Confidence, Manner of Speech, General Appearance, Gestures/ Expressions, Ability to Explain Goals, Enthusiasm, Evidence of Decision-Making, Attitude, Use of Examples, Eye Contact, Identified Knowledge, Skills and Abilities, Tone of Voice, and Overall Impression.

2. The Interview.

The interview will typically last 20 - 30 minutes in length and will consist of traditional and situational questions. You should have your credentials in hand upon arrival and be willing to discuss them in detail.

3. Questions & Answer Session.

Your interviewer will give you feedback and will suggest ways to continue to improve your interviewing. These may include additional practice and/or reading. Feel free to ask questions once the session has completed and take notes on ways to improve your interviewing skills. Remember that no one expects you to have a perfect interview, but by practicing your interviewing skills periodically, you will notice dramatic improvements in the way you communicate and interact with potential employers.



**PRACTICE INTERVIEW
AND
REVIEW SESSION**

Applying for Jobs



Presentation. As we discussed earlier in Job Interviewing, personal presentation is vital in order to make that positive first impression. Dressing conservatively is usually the rule of thumb, and you should always be prepared for the on-the-spot interview when placing applications with potential employers.

Networking. Friends, family, and former co-workers should always be aware that you are looking for work. Personal referrals are one of the number of ways people continue to find employment. Experts constantly tell us that networking is the most important part of any job search and that we need to do it all the time, not only at conferences and business lunches, but with friends and family functions.

Documentation. Maintaining a journal or log of your employment seeking activities is critical for maintaining future contact with prospective employers. This also provides you with a daily log of your job seeking activities and helps you prioritize your follow up activities.

Application Procedures. Remaining consistent with the employer's application instructions is one of the first ways employers test prospective candidate's ability to follow their directions. Applicants who apply by means other than what is requested are many times given no consideration even though their qualifications and training meet the employers needs. Additionally, you may be faced with troublesome and sometimes illegal questions on applications that you need to understand how to address properly without reducing your consideration for employment.

Timeliness. You should always arrive to your interview at least 10 minutes early. This sends a message to the interviewer that you have come prepared and are able to follow their instructions. It also affords you time to review your notes and become familiar with your surroundings that may help to alleviate anxiety or stress. If you discover you will be late, you must notify the employer immediately to explain the situation and make every attempt to reschedule.

Reasons for Leaving. This is a common question you will find on the majority of employment applications and will be asked at job interviews. Similar to wage disclosure, this is often used to screen out applicants. If you had to leave your last job because of an injury, yet the position for which you are applying for is within your physical capabilities, by answering "injured at last job" may expose you to unjust discrimination. We will discuss ways in which to respond honestly and help preserve your candidacy.

Exercise 3 - Salary and Wage Negotiations

1. Negotiating Wages During an Interview.

Never discuss salary or benefits during an interview. This should only be discussed after an offer of employment has been made. If the interviewer asks you to name what salary you are looking for, deflect the question and respond by saying that you would rather wait and discuss salary once a job offer has been made. If you feel pressed, you can either respond by saying that it would depend on the responsibilities involved, or you can cite an acceptable salary range.



2. Wage Disclosure on Application.

It is not uncommon to see "wage desired" or "salary expectations" on an application. When asked about salary requirements, it's best to respond with "Open" or "Negotiable." This is often a knockout question used to screen applicants. Use this response even when the wage is posted. You never know what the future holds, and you may be able to negotiate a higher wage.

PRACTICE SESSION WITH COUNSELOR

HFA - HOSTETLER FONTAINE & ASSOCIATES

JOB READINESS WORKSHEET

Client's Name:	File #:
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Exercise	Method/Materials	Date Completed	Client Initials	Comments:
1. Introduction to Labor Markets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Current Employment Trends • Employment Snapshots • Occupational Forecasts • Changes in Technology • Using the Computer 			
2. Dressing for Success	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Interview Attire • Looking Professional 			
3. Applying to Jobs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Presentation • Making Contacts • Application vs. Resume • The Paperless Application • Illegal Questions • Salary/Wage Questions • Documentation (Job Logs) 			
4. Job Interviewing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What to expect • Example Questions • Behavioral Questions • Addressing Difficult Questions • Asking Questions 			
5. Follow Up Activity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When, Why, and With Whom • Techniques and Strategies 			
6. Mock Interviewing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Walk-thru (practice) • Interview Simulation • Feedback/Review 			
7. Developing Your Credentials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Resume Creation • Cover Letter Creation • Completing Job Applications 			

The initials of the client indicate that they have developed a good understanding and have become comfortable with the methods, techniques and strategies relative to each instructional subject area as it specifically applies to searching for employment.

Comments:

