

## EMPLOYMENT FIRST JOB SEARCH PLAN

### *Identifying Why Participants Submit Incomplete Job Search Plans*

Why do some participants submit an incomplete Job Search Plan? The reasoning could fall into one or more of the categories below:

#### 1)Choice

The participant may have opted to leave his or her form blank or incomplete. This is not an acceptable choice because a completed Job Search Plan is a program requirement at the State and Federal level. It's important to remember that Employment First is not a mandatory program. Everyone is given the choice to participate or not. As such, each participant should be reminded of their options, sold the benefits of the program, and encouraged to completely fill out his or her Job Search Plan.

#### 2)Comprehension

Some of the concepts introduced in the Job Search Plan are quite challenging. Participants may need further clarification in order to fully understand what is being asked of them. They also may need assistance identifying their talents and opportunities. In this case, Case Managers should act as Employment Coaches and Teachers to help guide the participant to a greater understanding of specific job search strategies.

#### 3)Literacy

Some participants may have literacy issues that prevent them from independently filling out their Job Search Plan. Perhaps they don't have English language fluency or they are unable to read or write. It is important to identify these issues and if possible, assist the participant in the completion of the form.



## HOW ARE JOB SEARCH PLANS EVALUATED?

As the Employment First Program serves a diverse population, it may seem difficult to set a standard for performance. However, there are guidelines in place to help Case Managers and Supervisors determine whether a Job Search Plan needs more development. The checklist below contains Job Search Plan criteria that State Evaluators are looking for when they monitor Employment First participant files.

### **J**ob Search Plan Checklist

- |                                                                                |                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> An answer(s) in every field                           | <input type="checkbox"/> Avoided red-flag responses                             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> No obvious spelling or grammatical errors             | <input type="checkbox"/> Responses positively sell the participant              |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Complete sentences                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> Neatness/legibility                                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Demonstration of genuine self-enquiry                 | <input type="checkbox"/> Correction if required                                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Black or blue ink used                                | <input type="checkbox"/> Several drafts if necessary                            |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Relevant answers - pertaining to the job being sought | <input type="checkbox"/> Evidence of coaching for job search skills improvement |



## A JOB SEARCH PLAN WITH ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT



### Job Search Plan

Name Pat Millar Date 11/02

Your job search plan should give you a good idea of what you will be doing in the next few days to jump start your job search.

List three transferable skills / communication skills you've gained expertise in over the past few years:

- Take cash
- \_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_

Write a STAR story for one of your transferable skills:

S = Skill Cashier  
 T = Task Help people, stock shelves, coffee Ring up sales  
 A = Action \_\_\_\_\_  
 R = Result \_\_\_\_\_

List 4 types of jobs or industries that use your transferable skills that you would like to research:

- Cashier
- \_\_\_\_\_
- Home Inspection Warehouse
- Security

**Employment Challenges** are real or perceived barriers to employment. It is common to have an issue or two in your work history. To lessen the concern that employers may have about us, the process is to: **1). State your issue;** **2). Consider it from the employer's point of view;** **3). Think of ways to diminish any concerns:**

The Issue	Employer's Objection	What we can do or say to diminish it:
<u>No computer</u> <u>Gaps in Employment</u>	<u>Felony</u> <u>There are no jobs</u>	<u>Watching kids</u>

People who quickly find employment use a variety of methods to locate job vacancies. Name two specific methods to locate job vacancies:

- Computer
- \_\_\_\_\_

What are the main requirements for your next job?

My Requirements	What I'm NOT willing to do
<u>Pays \$\$\$</u>	<u>Toilets</u>

What do you need help with to succeed in your job search? Check each of the options that apply:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Resume and Master Application	<input type="checkbox"/>	Interview Coaching
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Computer skills/ training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Job Search skills / job leads
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Background issues/ Bond information	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:

NOTE: Please turn this Plan in to your Case Manager.

This Job Search Plan is considered to be incomplete.

Any blank fields or unclear answers need to be discreetly addressed with each participant, either during the *Core Competencies Workshop*, in follow-up client meetings, or in support groups.

The goal is to work closely in a coaching relationship with the participants in order to completely fill out their Job Search Plan.

Using the *Job Search Plan Checklist* on the previous page identify how Millar's Plan could be improved.

## **JOB SEARCH PLAN STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS**

### *Guidelines & Tips for Conquering the Job Search Plan*

Completing the Job Search Plan gives Employment First participants the opportunity to explore their work-related options. While some participants will be quick and independent learners, others will require individualized attention in order to complete the Job Search Plan in its entirety.

The following guidelines will assist you in helping participants through any areas of the Job Search Plan that they may be struggling with.

### **T**ransferable Skills/ Communications Skills

*Corresponding Handout: Transferable Skills Checklist*

Participants are asked to write down three transferable skills that they have gained expertise in over the years. They can select these skills from past experiences, or from the Transferable Skills Checklist.

#### Case Manager Career Coaching Tip:

If this section isn't complete, then work with the participant to fill out all three skills. Refer to the Transferable Skills Worksheet if they cannot offer any additional skills to input.



What experts say ... You are not your job title!

List three transferable skills / communication skills you've gained expertise in over the past few years:

1. Talk cash
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_



Help the participant identify two more of their transferable skills.

## Star Examples

*Corresponding Handout: Star Examples Handout*

This section allows participants to practice talking about their skills using the S.T.A.R format.

In the workshop, STAR examples are covered in detail; however, if the participant is struggling with this concept, they may require personalized coaching.

### Case Manager Career Coaching Tip:

Refer to the three transferable skills that the participant listed in the first section of the Job Search Plan.

- 1) Ask the participant to choose one of the skills to use as a STAR example.
- 2) Walk them through the STAR process.
- 3) If they are still finding it difficult to generate a specific example, ask the participant to think of a workplace accomplishment (Result) and work their way back to the skill. This is the RATS format.

Developing a good STAR example may take several meetings. This is also a good topic for further discussion during support groups.



What experts say ... Employers want to know how you added value to an organization.

Write a STAR story for one of your transferable skills:

S = Skill Coaching  
 T = Task Help people, teach them, coffee King of sales  
 A = Action \_\_\_\_\_  
 R = Result \_\_\_\_\_



A job title is not a skill. This STAR example can be improved with coaching.

## Researching Potential Occupations

Identifying new industries and employers will broaden the participant's job search options. Accordingly, this section invites participants to think-outside-the-box when it comes to matching their skills with new types of employment opportunities.

Participants are asked to write down four job titles or industries that use their transferable skills, with a particular focus on jobs they have not had in the past.

### Case Manager Career Coaching Tip:

This section should reflect deep and genuine thought into new types of career paths. Cross reference the options given in this section with the participant's *Employment First Application* in order to gauge whether the participant is on the right track to identifying fruitful opportunities.

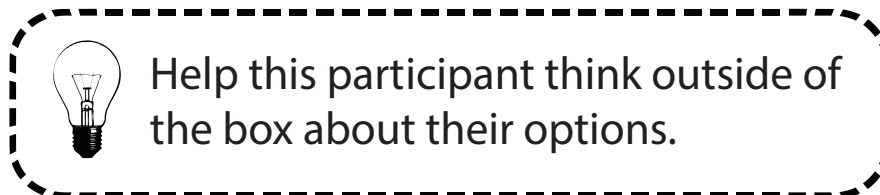
If they appear to need help in generating options, then brainstorm some potential industries and job titles with them. Onetonline.org offers useful tools for matching transferable skillsets with occupations.



What experts say ... Everybody has enough transferable skills to make a career change.

List 4 types of jobs or industries that use your transferable skills that you would like to research:

- |                   |                     |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1. <u>Cashier</u> | 3. <u>Minister</u>  |
| 2. _____          | 4. <u>Secretary</u> |



Help this participant think outside of the box about their options.

## **E**mployment Challenges *Corresponding exercise: Reframing Activity*

The Reframing Activity is a practical approach for evaluating possible barriers to employment. Participants should be prompted to fill out the chart during this exercise.

The Employment First Core Competencies Workshop Manual contains a list of some of the more common “big issues” including having a criminal background and long-term unemployment. It’s important for facilitators and Case Managers to familiarize themselves with the range of employment challenges in order to effectively lead participants through this section.

### Case Manager Career Coaching Tips:

For the Employment Challenges section to be considered complete, participants should have a comprehensive list of ideas written down in each column of the chart. When the chart is incomplete, illegible, or unintelligible participants will need to be coached through this section.

Employment barriers can be further explored during support groups or individual client meetings. Engage participants in a conversation about their specific employment barriers. The more ideas the participant can think of, the more strategies they will have for dealing with their big issues.



What experts say...Reframing barriers is an important step in re-gaining job seeking confidence.

**Employment Challenges** are real or perceived barriers to employment. It is common to have an issue or two in your work history. To lessen the concern that employers may have about us, the process is to: 1). State your issues; 2). Consider it from the employer's point of view; 3). Think of ways to diminish any concerns:

The Issue	Employer's Objection	What we can do or say to diminish it:
<i>No computer Exp in Employment</i>	<i>Felony Threat to job</i>	<i>Watching Lists</i>



Address the issues listed here and work with the participant to overcome them.

## Job Search Methods

*Corresponding Handout: Job Search Methods*

After completing the *Job Search Methods* matching exercise, participants are asked to write down two methods that they can use to search for employment. This question is like an open book test because they have possible answers on the Job Search Methods handout.

### Case Manager Career Coaching Tip:

At times participants work ahead, so it is common to see answers that were not given on the handout. If there are any blank fields or questionable answers in this section, then refer to the Job Search Methods handout and work with the participant in order to complete this section.



**What experts say... People who quickly find employment use a variety of methods to locate job vacancies.**

People who quickly find employment use a variety of methods to locate job vacancies. Name two specific methods to locate job vacancies:

1. Computer
2. \_\_\_\_\_



Talk about their current methods for job searching and offer suggestions.

## Setting Job Search Requirements

*Corresponding exercise: My Requirements*

This section empowers participants to find the right job for them. They are asked to set parameters for their next position by compiling a list of their job requirements and determining what they are not willing to do. This activity should be conducted as a group exercise in the Core Competencies Workshop.

### Case Manager Career Coaching Tip:

Everyone has requirements. If the chart has blanks or few entries, then work individually with the participant to generate a list of practical considerations.



**What experts say... Thinking about the type of job that you want in advance will ensure that you enjoy greater success at work.**

What are the main requirements for your next job?

My Requirements	What I'm NOT willing to do
<u>Pay \$\$\$</u>	<u>Tablets</u>



Discuss future employment goals and continue brainstorming.



## Job Search Success

The Employment First Core Competencies Workshop should be a springboard for further development. This section empowers the participant to choose areas in which they would like to improve. If this section is left blank because the participants' areas of interest are not represented on the form, then write in another goal for improvement in the "other" field.



What experts say...There is always room for improvement!

What do you need help with to succeed in your job search? Check each of the options that apply:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Resume and Master Application	<input type="checkbox"/>	Interview Coaching
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Computer skills/ training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Job Search skills / job leads
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Background issues/ Bond information	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:

## A GOOD JOB SEARCH PLAN

*Complete, but still a work in progress*

When the Job Search Plan is filled out with care, it becomes a powerful, strategic tool that can help participants stay focused in their job search and be prepared for interviewing.

It is also a work in progress. The example here could be the second, third or fourth draft!

Indeed, the flexibility of the Plan makes it a useful training instrument.

For further development, the participant could explore more of their transferable skills, work on additional S.T.A.R examples or discover new industries to research.

For these reasons, Case Managers should refer back to the Job Search Plan in order to keep the coaching relationship on track.

**EMPLOYMENT FIRST**

### Job Search Plan

Name Pat Miller Date 11/02

Your job search plan should give you a good idea of what you will be doing in the next few days to jump start your job search.

List three transferable skills / communication skills you've gained expertise in over the past few years:

- Cash handling
- Answer questions
- Multi-task

Write a STAR story for one of your transferable skills:

S= Skill Cash handling

T= Task Ring up sales in a busy store store

A= Action Speak to customers, take cash, open and close register during shifts

R= Result My drawer was always balanced

List 4 types of jobs or industries that use your transferable skills that you would like to research:

- Cashier
- Secretary
- Warehouse
- Customer Service

**Employment Challenges** are real or perceived barriers to employment. It is common to have an issue or two in your work history. To lessen the concern that employers may have about us, the process is to: 1). State your issues; 2). Consider it from the employer's point of view; 3). Think of ways to diminish any concerns:

The Issue	Employer's Objection	What we can do or say to diminish it:
<u>Gaps in employment</u>	<u>Worried about background issues</u> <u>The person may not have skills</u>	<u>Bonding/ WOTC bill</u> <u>Workfare means you are working and have current skills</u>

People who quickly find employment use a variety of methods to locate job vacancies. Name two specific methods to locate job vacancies:

- Networking
- Walking in

What are the main requirements for your next job?

My Requirements	What I'm NOT willing to do
<u>\$10-00 per hour</u> <u>a job near the light rail or bus</u>	<u>cleaning toilets</u> <u>sitting all day</u>

What do you need help with to succeed in your job search? Check each of the options that apply:

<input type="checkbox"/>	Resume and Master Application	<input type="checkbox"/>	Interview Coaching
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Computer skills/training	<input type="checkbox"/>	Job Search skills / job leads
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Background issues/ Bond information	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:

**NOTE:** Please turn this Plan in to your Case Manager.