

Getting Hired

A Guide for Job-Seekers with Disabilities



International
Labour
Organization



Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

Getting Hired

A Guide for Job-Seekers with Disabilities

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Preface

*Nothing can stop the man with the right mental attitude
from achieving his goal.*

Thomas Jefferson, Former American president

So, you have a disability and you are looking for a job! Congratulations, you have taken the important first step by picking up this guide.

The ILO's *AbilityAsia* programme has adapted this manual, *Getting Hired: A Guide for Job-Seekers with Disabilities* to help you. The guide is intended for individuals who are looking for salaried or paid employment in the formal sector. This means you probably live in a town or city. The guide can be used by individuals or groups, including organizations of individuals with disabilities. It can also be used on its own or as a part of a training workshop. Organizations of people with disabilities, placement agencies, non-governmental organizations and community organizations can also use the companion training manual *Getting Hired: A Trainer's Manual for Conducting a Workshop for Job-Seekers with Disabilities* to deliver a workshop on this topic.

While this guide has been prepared for adults with disabilities, the basic principles for finding a job and getting hired are the same for anyone. Non-disabled people may also find this book valuable. This guide may be useful to help you get full-time work, or part-time work while you are studying.

People with disabilities are no longer viewed as requiring protection and care; they are seen as individuals who have rights, including the right to access training and employment. With preparation and training you can become a valued member of the workforce. This has been proven time and again, by businesses and employers who hire people with disabilities and keep track of their overall performance, productivity and safety records.

Your right to meaningful work is guaranteed in a number of international instruments. Most recently the United Nations General Assembly adopted the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. The Convention, which entered into force on 3 May 2008, is being signed and ratified by many countries around the world. The ILO Convention concerning Vocational Rehabilitation and Employment (Disabled Persons), 1983 (No. 159) promotes equal treatment and equal opportunity for people with disabilities in work and training situations. Many countries also have laws to protect the right of people with disabilities to engage in work.

You should talk with a local organization of disabled persons to learn more about your human rights, your employment rights and how they are protected in your country.

This guide provides some additional information on your rights but is primarily designed to help you build the practical skills you need to find a job. It is general and we hope that you will find it useful. However, each country is different and local job-seeking practices may vary; therefore you should ask for information from local leaders and employment specialists and follow the accepted methods in your country.

The ILO encourages you to seek the job you desire and to advance yourself and your community through active participation. We wish you success in your job search and hope you find meaningful work in line with your goals!



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Introducing *Getting Hired*

When the student is ready, the teacher will appear.

Buddhist proverb

How this Guide Can Help You Find a Job

Since you are reading this guide, you are at least thinking about finding a job. *Getting Hired* is designed to get you started. It has information about job seeking and exercises to help you develop job-finding skills. It will help you to:

-  learn about yourself and jobs;
-  set a realistic job goal;
-  locate and respond to job leads;
-  write application letters;
-  write a curriculum vitae or résumé;
-  prepare for job interviews.

It is important to know that this guide aims to help you get a job with an employer. It does not include any information to help you start your own business. Formal jobs with employers tend to be located in urban areas, or bigger towns and villages.

Using this Guide

The best way to use *Getting Hired* is to read through the whole guide first. Then, go back and work through each section carefully. You will need a notebook or paper and a pen to complete some of the exercises.

Job seeking is like having a job. You need to be committed, work hard, develop your skills and spend the time it takes to succeed. Re-reading this guide regularly is important so you don't forget what it takes to get a job. Repeat the exercises in order to keep learning and to improve your job-seeking skills.

EXERCISE 1.1: GETTING HELP

Looking for a job can be fun and exciting, but sometimes, it can also be difficult and discouraging. It is a good idea to have a partner in the process who can give you ideas, encouragement and advice. A partner can also help you complete some of the exercises in this guide. The following is a list of what to do to find a partner.

- Make a list of people you can call on for help, support, assistance and advice.

A good partner might be a friend who is also looking for a job or someone who has already found one. A former teacher, Community Based Rehabilitation (CBR) worker, job placement officer, career counsellor, social worker or a person who works in business or government would also be a good partner. Your partner should be someone you know, trust and respect.

- Ask one or more people to be your job-seeking partner and to read this guide.
- Agree to meet regularly to discuss your progress and ideas.
- If you need information about particular equipment or a workplace for someone with your particular disability (e.g. a workstation on the ground floor for a wheelchair user, Braille keyboard to help you with typing), you may also need to consult a professional or your local disability organization.

You may also want to find a formal career guidance programme or counsellor who can help you develop your job-seeking skills.

Believe in Yourself

Most importantly, believe in yourself. You have skills and abilities. You have personal strengths and positive work habits. You have many things to offer although you may have a disability, lack work experience, or might not have the “right” clothes. There are jobs out there for you. Seek them out and don’t be afraid to try. If you don’t try, you will not succeed!



**You have made a decision to learn about job hunting.
Now it’s time to learn more about you.**

Assessing Yourself

He who knows others is wise; He who knows himself is enlightened.

Lao-Tzu, Chinese Philosopher

Before you look for a job, it is a good idea to look at yourself. You need to ask yourself what you want to do, what you can offer to an employer and what you expect in return. In this section you will:

- ✎ explore the impact of your self-view and other peoples' opinions of you;
- ✎ explore your interests, abilities and skills;
- ✎ assess your positive traits and behaviours;
- ✎ apply what you have learned about yourself to jobs.

Your Self-View and How Others Look at You

Often you look at yourself through the eyes of others; family, friends, peers, and even people you don't know. Because of your disability you may have been looked at differently. People may have ignored you or treated you badly because they think you are different. People may have not given you a job because of the way you look, walk or talk. Many people don't understand disability, and it can be difficult for them to see your abilities because they focus on disability.

The reality is that what other people think about you is only their opinions, not facts. However, you may have heard these opinions so many times and may have started to believe them. When looking for a job, the important thing is to focus on the positive. Identify your strengths and focus on them.

Everyone has different abilities, strengths and weaknesses. The exercises in this section will help you identify your abilities and strengths, so you can find and get a good job.

Your Interests, Abilities and Skills

Everyone is unique and has different things they like to do and different talents. Before starting your job search, it is important to explore your different interests, abilities and skills.

An **interest** is something you like or prefer to do. For example, playing sports, planting flowers, working on computers, or learning science could be considered interests.

An **ability** is a talent. It is something you learn easily or do well. Being naturally good at art, music, mechanics or with computers are abilities. Being good with numbers, remembering things, and physical strength are also abilities. Natural abilities can be developed with training. For example, someone who is good with his or her hands can develop skills like sewing or carpentry.

A **skill** is something you have learned to do. Reading, writing, repairing computers or preparing a legal document are all examples of skills. It's easier to develop skills if you have the necessary interest and abilities.

EXERCISE 2.1: LEARNING ABOUT YOURSELF

Knowing your interests, abilities and skills will help you set a job goal that is suited to you. One way to identify your interests, abilities and skills is to take tests that measure them. Career guidance programmes and counsellors can help you with these types of measures, but they are not always available or affordable. An easy way to assess yourself is to think about your life experiences. Here is what to do.

- On a piece of paper, make three columns. Label them “My Interests”, “My Abilities” and “My Skills”. Fill in the columns as fully as you can. Use the following list of questions to help you.
 - **My Interests**

What do I think about? What do I like to read? What do I do in my spare time? What do I like to do for fun? What makes me laugh? If I could have any job, what would it be?
 - **My Abilities**

What are my talents? What do I find easy to do or learn? Am I good with growing things, animals, music, solving problems, helping people, numbers, machines or anything else?
 - **My Skills**

What have I learned in school? What have I learned at home? What have I learned from other jobs? What equipment do I operate or use? What special training have I had?
- Ask people who know you for more ideas based on how they see you and your interests, abilities and skills.
- Ask your job-seeking partner to help you with this exercise, but try it by yourself first. This exercise is to help you discover what you like and want to do and what you are good at. Others can assist, but make sure you put down the things you like and want to do, not what others think you should like and want to do.

EXERCISE 2.2: POSITIVE TRAITS AND BEHAVIOURS CHECKLIST

Positive personality traits and behaviours are also important in getting and keeping a job.

- Read the following list of positive traits and behaviours.
- Tick those that apply to you.
- Put a star beside those where you are outstanding.
- Ask others who know you what they think.



Ask questions when necessary		
Can work under pressure		
Can solve problems		
Cheerful		
Cooperative		
Creative		
Caring		
Curious		
Committed		
Dependable		
Even-tempered		
Flexible		
Enthusiastic		
Focussed		
Follow direction		
Friendly		
Get along well with others		
Goal-oriented		
Good at questioning, investigating		
Helpful		
Honest		

Getting Hired

A Guide for Job-Seekers with Disabilities

	✓	★
Independent		
Kind		
Listen well		
Loyal		
Disciplined		
Neat		
Organized		
Patient		
Punctual		
Practical		
Quiet when needed		
Quick learner		
Responsible		
Self-confident		
Self-starter / Self-directed		
Sense of humour		
Take pride in work		
Team player		
Want to improve		
Well-mannered		
Willing to learn		
Work quickly		
Work steadily		

Add other positive traits or behaviours that describe you here.

EXERCISE 2.3: WHAT DO I HAVE TO OFFER?

With this exercise, you begin to develop positive statements about yourself that you can use in job interviews. Here is what you should do.

- Make a list of jobs that interest you. Select one.
- Refer to your list of interests, abilities and skills and your positive traits and behaviours checklist. Mark those that relate to the job selected.
- Develop a statement that describes what you have to offer based on items you marked.

For example, if being a child care worker interests you, your statement might say: *“I like children, I am patient and caring, and I have the ability to make people laugh. I helped raise my uncle’s children. I can also read, write and do math.”*

Review the statement with your job-seeking partner and practice saying it out loud. You can prepare statements for other jobs that interest you.



**You have learned about yourself.
Now it's time to learn about jobs.**

Learning about Jobs and Employment Practices

*Learn about a pine tree from a pine tree,
And about a bamboo plant from a bamboo plant.*

Matsuo Basho, Japanese poet

Before you begin your job search, you may need to learn more about jobs, employment practices and your rights. In this section you will:

- ✎ learn what you need to know about jobs before you go looking for one;
- ✎ find out where to look for job information;
- ✎ learn how to find out your rights as a disabled person seeking a job.

Job Duties, Requirements and Qualifications

Job **duties** refer to what you **do** on the job. For example, office clerks may be required to file papers, type or enter data on a computer.

Job **requirements** refer to skills and abilities applicants must have to do the job. Examples are physical strength or good communication. Sometimes jobs may require that you have certain things like tools or a car.

Job **qualifications** refer to specific training, experience or certificates that demonstrate certain knowledge and skills. For example, to qualify for some jobs, you must have a college degree, complete a skills test or show a certificate that you have reached a certain level of training.

Job duties, requirements and qualifications are often listed in what are called a job description or terms of reference. These are written documents that tell you about the job. Some employers do not have formal written job descriptions and may need to tell you about the duties, requirements or qualifications.

Salary and Benefits

When you get hired for a job, you agree to perform the job duties in return for a salary or wage. Some countries have minimum wage laws and you should know about them before you job hunt. In addition, some jobs include benefits. Depending on the employment practices in your country, benefits might include:

- transportation allowances;
- housing or a housing allowance;
- paid leave (earning pay for absences due to illness or holidays);
- assistance if you become sick or injured on the job (sometimes called workers' compensation);
- medical or life insurance;
- pension, retirement or other savings plans;
- job-related skills training;
- free equipment, tools or uniforms.

Generally, if you work on a daily, temporary or part-time basis, you do not receive benefits. If you work as a regular, full-time employee, you are more likely to get benefits.

As a disabled person, you should get the same salary and benefits as others who are doing the same job and have the same qualifications. You may also be entitled to some changes to the workplace or specific equipment so you can do the job effectively. Please refer to the Section "Labour Laws and Equal Opportunity", which includes more information about your rights.

Job Availability, Job Security and Career Advancement

Job availability is related to being able to get a job. In seaport towns, there are jobs related to shipping, but you are unlikely to find such jobs inland. As computers become more common, so do jobs for people skilled in operating them. The availability of jobs is related to the natural environment and the types of businesses that exist in that area. Learn about job availability in your local community so you know where you have the greatest chance of getting hired.

In Asia, economies are changing. The most important growth areas in many Asian countries are in the manufacturing and service industries, such as retail, finance, hospitality and tourism. Private sector businesses are growing and replacing a lot of government jobs. Many countries are reducing the size of their government sectors, which will make it more difficult to get jobs in government. The financial and information technology sectors are growing and providing a lot of quality jobs.

Most people want a secure job. A secure job is one that you are likely to have for some time. Positions with stable or growing companies, or in job areas where growth is expected, may have good security. Some jobs, like temporary or casual labour positions, have little security. Other types of jobs, like government posts, may be on the decline for many reasons.

The opportunities to learn new skills and advance on the job may be important to you and your future. Some employers train you on the job or have formal training programmes where you learn a trade. These formal learning situations are called apprenticeships. Other jobs may provide opportunities for further advancement in more responsible positions, such as a supervisor or a manager.

How to Learn about Jobs and Employment Practices

The following list describes ways to learn about jobs that interest you.

- Talk to someone who is doing the job.
- See a job counsellor or job placement specialist.
- Consult with organizations of disabled persons or a non-governmental organization that helps disabled persons find jobs.
- Talk to an employer or business person who may hire people for that type of work.
- Read the newspapers, including classified advertisements and articles about jobs.
- Consult professional and business associations.
- Visit a trade school or rehabilitation centre that provides training in those job skills.
- Visit a trade union office that represents workers who do the job.
- Contact government offices such as a labour ministry that deals with employment.
- Go to the library and read about the job.
- Search on the Internet (see a list of useful Internet sites at the end of this guide).

EXERCISE 3.1: LEARNING ABOUT JOBS

Talking to employers or people who are already working is a good way to learn if a particular job is suitable for you. When looking for a job, it is good practice to find out as much as you can about the duties, qualifications and requirements for that position. Here is how.

- Refer back to the list of jobs that interest you (see exercise 2.3).
- Make a list of people you know who do those jobs, or local employers in that field of work.
- Select one person from the list.
- Make a list of questions to ask the person. Here are some examples.
 - Would you tell me about this company (office, factory, restaurant, etc.) and the type of work done here? How long has the company been in business? How many people work here? Do you employ any people with disabilities? What type of growth has occurred? Is expected to occur?
 - What are the current developments in this industry?
 - What are the different types of jobs at this company?
 - How is this company (office, factory, shop, etc.) different from others that do the same type of work?
 - I am thinking of working as a (name of job or job area). What are the current opportunities for this job (type of work)? What are the chances for job security and advancement?
 - What are the job duties? Requirements? Qualifications?
 - What would an average day be like working in this job?
 - Can you tell me about the salary range and benefits that are typically offered?
 - What is the best way to find job opportunities for this type of work?
 - Does the company have a policy about hiring people with disabilities?

- Can you suggest other companies or individuals for me to contact?
 - Would it be possible to take a tour of the company (office or factory)? (Use this as an opportunity to learn more.)
 - Would it be possible to speak to any employees you have with disabilities?
- Contact the person to set up a meeting. Explain that you only want to learn more about jobs. Promise to be brief and express your appreciation for the person's time, even if he or she doesn't agree to meet with you.

You can use this process to meet with people doing different jobs to get a good understanding of the kinds of jobs you are interested in.

Note:

Depending on the culture in your country, it may be difficult for you to contact someone you don't know. If this is the case, think about all the people you do know, your family members, your friends, local business people, etc. There are likely to be a lot of people working in the area you are interested in. These people can be very good sources of information for you.

Labour Laws and Equal Opportunity

There are a number of different kinds of laws and policies that are relevant for job-seekers and workers with disabilities. It is important that you know the relevant laws in your country so that you can ensure you are being treated equally and fairly.

Labour Laws

Labour laws in your country may set minimum levels of pay and define practices that employers must follow in giving other benefits such as holidays or sick leave. They may also define standards about safety, work hours and other issues, such as protecting people from discrimination or unfair treatment. For example, some labour laws protect groups of people such as women and people with disabilities.

Non-Discrimination Laws

Non-discrimination laws aim to protect people from not being given the same opportunities simply because of particular personal characteristics. Non-discrimination laws can apply to many different groups in the population (women, different ethnic groups). Some countries have disability-specific non-discrimination laws.

These laws mean that employers cannot exclude a job-seeker, or treat a worker negatively only based on the disability, where the disability has little effect on job performance. For example, an advertisement for a job for a sewing machine operator states that only good looking people can apply. Being good looking is not essential to do the job effectively and would thus be illegal under non-discrimination laws.

Reasonable Accommodation

Many countries now require an employer to take account of an individual's disability and try to provide an adjustment to the workplace or working equipment to cater for the needs of that worker. This is known as the requirement to make a reasonable accommodation. Examples of reasonable accommodations could be a particular office chair for someone with a back problem or providing a ramp for someone who uses a wheelchair. What is considered reasonable is often defined at the country level.

Quotas

Quota schemes are a way of trying to encourage the employment of people with disabilities. Under a quota scheme, employers are required to hire a minimum number of people with disabilities. In some countries employers who fail to hire the minimum number of people with disabilities must pay a levy. This money is then used to help disabled persons in some way, in seeking a job.

If your country has a quota scheme, you may find that employers are very willing to hire people with disabilities to meet their obligations. Many countries that have quota systems do not require small businesses to meet the quota.

Consult a labour ministry, job placement organization, trade union or disabled persons' organization to learn about the specific laws in your country.

EXERCISE 3.2: LEARNING ABOUT LABOUR LAWS

Labour laws and disability laws vary from country to country. This exercise will help you find out about the relevant laws in your country.

- Make a list of the relevant local organizations that might know about labour laws and disability laws. These could include disabled persons' organizations, job placement services, trade unions or the Government Ministry of Labour.
- Make a list of questions you would like to ask to find out more about the laws and policies. Here are some examples.
 - What are the basic protections and benefits for workers under the labour laws (e.g. minimum wages, holidays, social insurance)?
 - Are there any specific protections for people with disabilities (or women or other groups that interest you) in the labour laws?
 - Are there any other specific laws or policies relating to people with disabilities (or women, etc.)? Can you explain them to me?
 - Does this country have non-discrimination laws protecting people with disabilities?
 - Are there any quotas or requirements for employers to hire people with disabilities? Do the quotas apply to small businesses?
- Contact the relevant organizations you listed and make an appointment to visit them to discuss these issues. When you make the appointment, explain that you want to talk to someone who knows about laws and policies relevant to workers with disabilities.



**You have learned about jobs, employment practices
and your rights.**

Now it's time to develop your job goal.



Setting Your Job Goal

*The significance of a man is not in what he attains
but in what he longs to attain.*

Khalil Gibran, Lebanese artist, poet and writer

A goal is a clear statement about something you want to do or accomplish. Your long-term job goal may not be immediately in your reach, but with each job and work experience you can move towards it. Believe in yourself, be realistic and stay strong. Keep your focus on your goal and you are likely to reach it, one step at a time.

A job goal gives direction to your search. In this section you will:

-  learn the importance of having a job goal;
-  develop your own job goal.

Why Have a Job Goal?

As a job-seeker, you need to be clear about the type of job you want. Without a goal, you could easily get lost or confused. A **specific** goal organizes your job search. It helps you decide which employers or job leads to pursue. It also guides you in preparing for interviews.

Your job goal should be realistic. A **realistic** goal is a goal that you can expect to achieve. It should be based on your abilities and the availability of jobs in your community. If your goal is not realistic, consider changing it or having a long-term plan to achieve it. Talk to your job-seeking partner or get some career counselling. Sometimes, if you get more training, an unrealistic job goal can become a realistic one.

Specific Needs

You may have some specific needs that should become part of your job goal. These may relate to salary, benefits, hours, location or access to public transportation. For example, a disability might require you to work indoors or at an accessible workplace. If you rely on public transportation or do not want to move from where you currently live, location may be important.

Examples of Job Goals

Some of the following examples of job goals include particular needs, while others do not.

- *“To get a job as a farm helper, construction worker, painter or doing outdoor work that does not require specific training and where I can use my cell phone or written communication to accommodate my hearing impairment.”*
- *“To get a job as a bank teller, office clerk or in a similar position by March. It must be close to the bus line so I have transport.”*
- *“To get a job as a welder any place in the country. I will need housing or a housing allowance if the job is too far from my home.”*
- *“To find a job as a teacher, counsellor or teacher’s aide within the city limits. I must be able to get to the classroom in my wheelchair, and the boards or other teaching tools must be within reach from my seated position.”*

EXERCISE 4.1: WRITING YOUR JOB GOAL

In the previous exercises you have learned about yourself and learned about jobs. At this stage apply this knowledge to writing your job goal. Use what you have learned in the past exercises and follow the job goal examples. Here is what you need to do.

- Write a job goal that includes any specific needs that you have.
- Discuss your goal with your job-seeking partner and someone who knows about that type of work.
- Repeat Exercise 2.3 “What do I have to offer”, if your job goal differs from the job selected for that exercise.



**Now you have a job goal.
You need to prepare the job-seeking documents
to help you reach it.**

Preparing Job-Seeking Documents

*Your words are the seed, your soul is the farmer,
the world is your field.*

Nasir-i-Khusraw, Persian writer

When you look for a job, employers will usually expect you to fill out a job application or to give them papers that describe you and your qualifications. In this section, you will:

- ✍ learn how to complete a job application;
- ✍ identify referees and learn how to obtain references;
- ✍ learn how to complete a curriculum vitae or résumé.

The Job Application

The job application is a form that you complete when you apply for a job. Job applications ask about your education, work history, skills and for other information, such as health or references.

Applications tell employers about your qualifications and they are a sample of your work. Employers may decide whether or not to interview you based on your application. The application should be neat, complete and accurate.

Here are some tips for completing job applications.

- Read and follow directions carefully, attach a photo if requested.
- Use the Personal Data Sheet, which is described in this section and located at the end of the guide. It can help you complete the application accurately.

- Print clearly or type accurately, except where your signature is requested.
- Use blue or black ink if you are writing.
- Cross out mistakes neatly or ask for another application, if needed.
- Spell correctly and use proper grammar.
- Be honest.
- Don't leave blanks (write "not applicable" or simply "NA" if the question is not relevant to you).
- Keep the form clean and flat.
- If additional space is needed, use a clean sheet of paper and attach it to the form.
- Use positive, businesslike language. For example, if you are asked why you left a job, use words like "laid off" rather than "fired" or "sacked". If you chose to leave a job, write "Left for a better position" rather than "Quit because the pay was too low". Do not say anything negative about a former employer on the job application or in an interview.

Electronic Applications

Many job applications are now done online with instructions for how to complete each section. Many of the points above about written applications also apply to electronic applications. Usually if you leave blanks on an online application, you will not be able to progress through to the following sections of the form, so answer all the questions. Some online applications will allow you to attach other documents such as cover letters and résumés.

Here are some additional tips for online applications.

- If you need to attach additional documents, make sure they are small (200-300 kb).
- After submitting your online application you will probably get an acknowledgement email. Keep this for your records.
- If you are not skilled with computers and the internet, ask for help from a person or organization such as a job placement specialist, disabled persons' organization, school or training centre.
- Check all your answers and your grammar and spelling before sending the online application.

Dealing with Disability

If you have a disability you need to make a decision about whether to mention it on the job application or in a cover letter. Some application forms may ask a question about health or disability, which are actually different things. Health is a medical term that refers to whether or not you are sick, have an illness or chronic condition. Disability refers to functioning. Most people with disabilities are healthy.

With regard to disability, some people leave the question blank, if asked. This may make the employer suspicious that you are withholding information. Some people chose to write "Will discuss at the interview". Others simply answer the question noting that it will not affect their job performance or express the need for an accommodation.

Employers who know you, a disabled persons' organization, a trade union official, job placement officer or CBR worker may be able to give you further advice about what to do in your particular case and according to the situation in your local job market.

Referees and Letters of Reference

Referees or references are people who talk with employers or write a letter of recommendation on your behalf. Employers may call or write to your referees when you are being considered for a specific position. Some job-seekers have their referees or former employers prepare a general letter addressed “To Whom It May Concern” and have photocopies available when and if employers ask for them. Although not all employers will ask for referees, you should always be prepared to provide the names and contact information of references if you are asked.

Referees or references should be individuals who have known you for a year or longer. They should be willing to attest to your good character, work habits and qualifications. Former teachers, employers, instructors, and religious leaders make good referees. You should not use family members. Ideally, referees should be employed persons or have knowledge about the world of work.

Referees or letters of reference should be current. Keep in contact with your referees and keep them informed about your job search. If you give their name as a contact, also give them an outline of the job you have applied for, so they can present you in the best way.

EXERCISE 5.1: YOUR REFEREES

Employers often ask for referees. You can use a general reference letter for any job, but many employers will want to contact the referee to speak specifically about your suitability for the particular job. Use the following steps to identify three referees.

- Review the list of people you considered as job-seeking partners in Exercise 1.1. Add other people who would be good referees.
- Contact people you want to use as referees and get their permission. Be sure you know their full name, job title, place of business and address and day-time telephone number and email address (if applicable).

Note:

If you are providing more than one contact method, ask your referee which method of contact they prefer.

- Prepare a separate sheet of paper listing your referees or include them on your Personal Data Sheet.

The Personal Data Sheet

A Personal Data Sheet contains the information requested on job applications. If you have prepared the sheet correctly, you can copy the information you need from the Personal Data Sheet onto your applications with confidence.

EXERCISE 5.2: COMPLETING A PERSONAL DATA SHEET

To prepare a Personal Data Sheet:

- Find the sample Personal Data Sheet at the back of this guide.
- Complete it and check the spelling, grammar and all information.
- Ask someone with good writing skills and knowledge of the world of work to review it.
- Keep your completed data sheet for future reference.

The Curriculum Vitae or Résumé

A curriculum vitae (CV) or résumé is a typewritten summary of a job applicant's qualifications. In the past a curriculum vitae was normally used for high-level academic jobs and a résumé for other types of jobs. However, many people now use these terms to mean the same thing.

People applying for professional or business jobs, such as accountants, teachers, architects or managers are often expected to have résumés. Employers may also expect a résumé for other types of jobs. Résumés are given to employers or attached to letters when you inquire about job opportunities or respond to job leads.

Even if you do not have professional experience, make a summary of your education and work experiences. Include volunteer work that you have done and outline your responsibilities in each position you have held. Be honest, even if you do not have formal qualifications, you still have personal characteristics, education and other experience that qualify you for work.

All résumés should contain your name and contact information, work history, educational experience and special skills. Depending on your country's job-seeking practices, employers may expect to see a job objective, marital status and personal interests or hobbies.

The word “I” is not used in a résumé. For example, when describing job duties, it is better to say “Prepared payroll” instead of “I prepared payroll”.

The following are some tips to assist you in preparing a résumé.

DO

- use standard business size (A4 or letter) white paper;
- type your résumé and use a standard clear font such as Times New Roman or Arial if using a computer;
- use action verbs to describe job duties and accomplishments;
- include all your qualifications;
- use spell check and review your résumé several times to make it perfect;
- keep it brief and to the point.

DON'T

- include anything negative or unnecessary;
- refer to yourself on the résumé, don't use "I";
- put a date on your résumé;
- mention wages or salaries, either from former jobs or what you expect to earn;
- cross out or write over mistakes;
- use fancy fonts, formatting or add pictures (unless requested).

EXERCISE 5.3: PREPARING A RÉSUMÉ

Complete this exercise if you need a résumé in your job search or think you might. It is best to be prepared. Using your Personal Data Sheet, complete the following steps to prepare a résumé.

- Develop a draft using a format similar to the sample shown below.
- Ask a professional in your field or someone who does hiring to review it.
- Revise as needed and have a final typewritten copy prepared.
- Make several good quality photocopies or computer print outs.

SAMPLE RÉSUMÉ

Ms Nguyen Thi Hong Minh
1 Dang Dung Street
Hanoi
Telephone: (04) 123 456
Email: Hongminh@gmail.com

EDUCATION/CERTIFICATIONS

2001-2004 Vietnam National University
Bachelor of Economics (Accounting)
1995-2001 Dong Da Secondary School

WORK EXPERIENCE

2005-2007 A/S Design and Printers, Limited
P.O. Box 4337
Hanoi
Tel. 435 671
Title: Accounts Clerk
Duties: Prepared payroll records and administered
payment of cheques for entire office.

2004-2005 Tuong Lai Auditors
130 Kim Ma St
Hanoi
Tel. 430987
Title: Accountant Assistant
Duties: Managed credit control and balanced account
books; operated personal computer using
dBASE 3 and Excel.

LANGUAGES: Vietnamese – mother tongue
English – intermediate level reading, writing, speaking

Other Documents You May Need

If you have attended any formal courses, e.g. a degree programme or a vocational training course, you should have a copy of graduation certificate or attendance certificate, which you may be required to attach to your résumé.

Do not send original documents with any application; make standard, A4 size photocopies. If you are required to send documents via email, or to attach to an online application, then you will need to scan the original documents. Try to keep attachments small (around 200-300 kb each).







**You have prepared your job-seeking documents.
Now, it's time to find job openings.**

Finding and Responding to Job Openings

Nothing ever comes to one, which is worth having, except as a result of hard work.

Booker T. Washington, American educator

As a job-seeker, you are a salesperson. The “product” you are selling is yourself and your skills; the “buyer” is the employer. Your task is to find job leads and then to pursue them. In this section, you will:

-  review sources of job leads;
-  develop your personal job-finding network;
-  learn to write a cover letter;
-  learn effective ways to contact employers.

Job-Finding Sources

There are many ways to find out about employers and job leads. Depending on where you live, the following are some of the most common.

- Stories in newspapers and business publications
- “Help Wanted” signs
- Advertisements in newspapers
- School counselling or job placement offices (at secondary or trade schools, colleges or training centres)
- Government employment and personnel offices
- Specific job placement programmes for disabled persons

- Organizations of and for disabled persons
- Personnel or human resource offices of large companies
- Managers or owners of small companies or stores
- Bulletin boards that post job openings (both online and others)
- Trade unions
- Telephone books or business directories (e.g. Chamber of Commerce membership directory)
- Internet job sites (some examples are listed at the back of this guide)
- Employer, professional or trade groups
- Private or public employment agencies (private agencies may charge a fee)
- Non-governmental or community organizations
- Friends, relatives, neighbours and other personal contacts.

EXERCISE 6.1: BUILDING YOUR PERSONAL JOB-FINDING NETWORK

One of the best ways to find out about jobs is through people you know. This is how to build your Personal Job-Finding Network.

- Review your lists of people from Exercises 1.1 “Getting Help” and 5.1 “Your Referees”.
- Add to them the names of people who might be able to help you find a job, like friends, relatives, former employers and teachers, job placement officers, social workers, business people and others. This is your Personal Job-Finding Network.
- Talk to people in your network about your job goal and qualifications. Ask them to look for job leads and to talk about you to their network of contacts.

Making Contact with Employers

You may contact employers for many reasons, such as to ask about job openings, to schedule an interview or to get information. The three main ways to make contact with employers are by writing, e.g. letter or email, by telephone or in person.

Before you contact an employer, you should do the following.

- Learn as much as you can about the employer or company and what type of work they do.
- Try to get the name of a person in charge of hiring.
- Make sure your job-seeking documents are in order.
- Be clear about the purpose of your contact.
- Prepare what you want to say.

The following dos and don'ts apply to contacting employers.

DO

- be honest and polite;
- state your purpose clearly;
- be brief and businesslike;
- present yourself positively.

DON'T

- try to make the employer feel sorry for you;
- speak about yourself negatively;
- discuss personal problems;
- ask about salary or benefits at the beginning of your conversation with an employer;
- say anything negative about former employers.

The following information describes the different ways you can contact employers.

By Letter or Email

You may write a letter to ask about job openings or to respond to a specific lead. In either case, your letter should describe:

- the type of work you want;
- how you learned about the job;
- your experience and qualifications;
- your desire to be interviewed;
- how you can be reached.

If you are responding to an advertised position, your letter should include how your skills meet the responsibilities and requirements of the job. End your letter with a note of thanks and sign your name. After you have completed the letter, read it carefully. Ask someone else to review it, since it is difficult to find your own mistakes. Attach a résumé or other documents if you feel they are needed.

Make sure the letter:

- is neat and clean;
- can be read easily;
- uses correct grammar and spelling (if you are using a computer, use the spell check and grammar function);
- is logically written;
- is in the correct business format;
- includes all necessary information;
- is one page or less.

Sample letter one below illustrates many of the points previously discussed. Before you prepare your letters, check with your partner, a local placement specialist or an employer about format or content requirements that may be different from the sample.

The following dos and don'ts apply to letter writing.

DO

- address your letter to a person by name;
- send an original, signed letter to each employer;
- use simple language and basic sentence structure;
- write letters that are unique and specific to you;
- mention the requirements of the job and how you meet them;
- try to answer the question that the employer will be asking while reading your letter: *“Why should I hire this person?”*.

DON'T

- waste your first paragraph by writing a boring introduction;
- repeat everything on your résumé (You can use your letter to highlight the aspects of your résumé that are relevant to the position.);
- forget to personally sign the letter, in blue or black ink.

EXERCISE 6.2: ANALYSE SAMPLE LETTERS

Review the two sample letters in this section. Refer to the dos and don'ts listings above and identify the strengths and weaknesses in each application letter. Look carefully at the use of language, terms and grammar. To assist you, some of the errors deliberately inserted into sample letter number two include:

- incorrect spelling;
- bad grammar;
- use of emotional language;
- use of negative statements;
- lack of attention to detail.

If you were an employer and you were presented with both letters, to which person would you offer an interview and possibly a job?

SAMPLE LETTER OF APPLICATION ONE

Thawatchai Chongdee
Room 108, Srithana Condominium
Soi Srithana, T Suthep, A Muang
Chiang Mai, 50300
Tel. 123 456
Email: chongdeet81@gmail.com

14 January 2007

Khun Siripan Kuna
Managing Director
Thai Silp Manufacturing Company
528 Ratchatewi Rd
Bangkok 10340
Thailand

REF: APPLICATION FOR THE POST OF ACCOUNTANT

Dear Khun Siripan,

This letter is in reference to the accounting job, which was advertised in the *Bangkok Post* of Friday, 11 January 2007. I think I am well qualified for the job having completed CPA I and II in 2005, and having worked in the accounting field since that time. I have always enjoyed working in accounting, and am hard-working and responsible. In my previous jobs I have learned the latest accounting software and I am proficient with Quickbooks and Mind Your Own Business (MYOB).

In February 2005, I secured a job with Thaksin Silk Co., Ltd., where I worked as an Accounts Clerk until September 2007. In October 2007, I joined the One Tambon One Product (OTOP) Information Centre in Chiang Mai, where I work as an Assistant Accountant, often taking on the tasks of the Chief Accountant when necessary. Unfortunately, OTOP is moving offices and reducing its staff. I feel that I am now ready to take on new challenges and additional responsibilities.

Copies of my certificates are attached. I am happy to provide referees, if you wish to talk to any of my previous employers or others who know me.

I look forward to hearing from you. I am ready to come for an interview at any time.

Yours faithfully,

Thawathchai Chongdee

SAMPLE LETTER OF APPLICATION TWO

Thawatchai Chongdee
Srithana Condominium
Chiang Mai, 50300
Thailand
Email: pumpingiron@gmail.com

Managing Director
Thai Silp Manufacturing Company
528 Ratchatewi Rd
Bangkok 10340
Thailand

REF: OPPORTUNITY – ACCOUNT CLERK

I am walking by crutch. Dear Mr Sir, I need job to get money and support my old mother and my brother and sisters too.

Please sir, when I saw you advertisement I felt very happy. I ask you please consider me. I am a form four leaver and I have done ACNC I and II and CPA II.

I have a lot of experience in Accounts office. I worked with Thaksin Silk Co Ltd. for two years then I left and worked with OTOP in Chiang Mai for some months before I had a car accident and because the boss did not like disabled people, he sacked me.

I beg you sir to feel sympathy for me as a disabled person. We disabled are looked down upon but some of us can be very good workers.

Please write back to me soon and tell me when to come for an interview. I wish you could help me.

Yours faithfully,

“Chai”

Unless you know the employer hires people with disabilities, you may not want to mention your disability in the letter. If you will require specific equipment, or an adjustment for the application or interview process, you can bring up your disability after you get a positive reply.

EXERCISE 6.3: WRITING A LETTER

If you plan to write letters as part of your job search, practice first. Here is how.

- Select an employer or a job advertisement that you are interested in.
- Prepare a letter by using the tips and format suggested in this Guide.
- Ask your job-seeking partner to check the letter and suggest improvements.
- Revise the letter and get it reviewed again, until it is the way you want it.
- Send the letter, if you are preparing it for a job you want.

Telephone

You may use the telephone for many reasons during your job search such as to get more information or to set up an interview. Avoid using it as a way to interview for the job, since personal interviews are more effective.

When contacting employers by telephone, here is a simple format to start the conversation.

- Greet the person who answers the telephone.
- Introduce yourself.
- State the purpose of your call.
- Wait for a response.

Example:

“Good morning. This is Mohammed Kosim. I am calling to find out if you have an opening for a machinist.”

When responding to a job lead or trying to get an interview, you may need to make a brief statement about your skills.

Example:

“Hello, my name is Mohammed Kosim I am calling to speak to Mr Jawara.” (Call is transferred.)

“Good afternoon, Mr Jawara, my name is Mohammed Kosim. I am responding to the advertisement in the newspaper for a machinist. I just finished my training at the technical institute and would like to meet with you to discuss the job.”

Then wait for the employer’s response. If the job has been filled or there are no openings, ask when would be a good time to call again about future possibilities or if he or she could refer you to other employers who may have openings.

Here are some additional tips for using the telephone.

- Call from a quiet location.
- Prepare a script of what you would like to say.
- Talk directly into the mouthpiece.

- Speak clearly and cheerfully.
- Take notes.
- Listen carefully.
- Say thank you at the end of the call.

EXERCISE 6.4: TELEPHONING ROLE PLAY

If you plan to use the telephone as part of your job search, practice first. In a role play you practice the situation as if it were real. Ask your job-seeking partner to play the role of the employer so you can practice telephoning. Try to make it as real as possible. Here is how.

- Locate the name of an employer or a job lead that you are interested in.
- Ask your job-seeking partner to role play the telephone conversation with you.
- After the call, ask your partner to evaluate your telephone conversation and suggest ways to improve.
- Try again and practice until you are comfortable.

If you have a disability, it should not stop you from contacting employers by telephone. The following are some specific tips.

- If you have a hearing or speech impairment and cannot use the telephone, ask a friend or interpreter to make the call for you. Make sure you explain clearly to the friend or interpreter that you want them to discuss your skills and abilities, as well as your disability.
- Seek other people with disabilities like yours and disabled persons' organizations and get their advice, support and help. Many organizations have special programmes to help disabled persons find jobs.

Answering Your Telephone

When you are looking for work, you will provide your phone number or mobile phone number to potential employers. If you give out your personal mobile phone, remember to be polite when you answer calls. If you give out your home phone number and other people may answer the phone such as parents or siblings, advise them that potential employers may be calling and ask them to also be polite when answering the phone.

Contacting an Employer in Person

If you visit an employer without an appointment, you must be prepared for anything - from never getting past the front desk to interviewing for the job immediately. Dress neatly and act confidently. Be polite and be yourself!

Here are some good ways to approach an employer in person.

- If you have a name of a contact person, ask to speak with him or her. Otherwise, ask for the personnel or human resources office in a large company or the person who does the hiring, such as the owner or manager in a small company.
- Greet the person you are meeting and use his or her name if you know it. Use appropriate titles, e.g. Dr, Mr, Ms or those appropriate for your culture. (For example, the term Khun is used in Thailand as the title of respect for men and women.)
- Introduce yourself. Shake hands if appropriate and make eye contact respectfully in keeping with your local customs.
- State the purpose of your visit. If someone referred you, name the person.
- Follow the employer's lead (e.g. wait until you are asked to sit down and let him or her ask the questions).
- If there are job openings and the employer wishes to interview you, proceed.

- If there are no openings, you may want to conduct an informational interview (see Exercise 3.1). You should also ask if you can complete an application or leave a résumé, find out if and where job openings are posted, ask if you can check back about openings at a later date or if the employer knows of similar jobs with other companies.
- Thank the person (or people) whom you have spoken to.

The following are some additional tips.

- Review this section of the guide and the Section “Interviewing for a Job” before you make in-person visits.
- Carry a pen, blank paper and all your job-seeking documents with you.
- Switch off your mobile phone during the visit.
- Don’t smoke or chew gum.
- Remain positive and polite even if you are turned away.
- Remember that it is natural to be nervous when job seeking.

If you have a disability, it should not stop you from contacting employers in person. Here are some specific tips.

- If you have a physical disability that affects your mobility, you may want to find out about the accessibility of the building, office or factory before you visit an employer in person.
- If you are hearing-impaired and need an interpreter, make arrangements to have one with you (e.g. a friend or an interpreter from a disabled persons’ organization).
- Seek out other people with disabilities like yours and get their advice and support.

When and How to Tell an Employer about Your Disability

Telling an employer about your disability and how and when to do so are personal decisions. You should base your decisions on the nature of your disability, your preferences, what you know about the employer and what you think the impact of your disability is on your ability to do the job and on getting hired.

In some cases, the employer may know you have a disability because he or she knows you personally or because a job placement specialist or reference may have told the employer. Or, your disability may be visible and obvious. Otherwise, you may need to decide if you should mention your disability in a letter, on your résumé, on your job application or at the interview. If your disability is not visible and will not affect your ability to do the job, you may decide not to tell the employer.

Here are some things to consider in making your decisions and some examples of what to do when you do tell an employer.

- Generally, employers want to know if an applicant or employee has a disability.
- Myths, stereotypes and unfounded concerns may make some employers hesitant to hire people with disabilities. Other employers may judge people solely on their abilities.
- Many employers are very willing to hire people with disabilities. If you know that the employer has already hired some people with disabilities or the advertisement mentions that people with disabilities are encouraged to apply, you should mention your disability with the employer. If your country has a quota law then employers may be specifically looking for workers with disabilities.

- Placement officers or others who may refer you to job leads may be the first to tell an employer about your disability. Make sure they have accurate information about you, your qualifications and your disability.
- Your disability should **never** be the first thing you tell the employer, it is far more relevant that the employer knows about your skills and abilities first rather than your impairment.
- Whenever you tell the employer that you have a disability, express your willingness to answer the employers' questions or concerns about your disability and how it may affect your work capacity. It is best to have such a discussion in person so that the employer can see you as a capable person and have a chance to sell yourself and address his or her concerns directly.

Example:

“Before we meet next week, I want you to know that I am blind. I am confident that I can do this job but will be glad to discuss my visual disability with you further next week.”

- Some people prefer to tell an employer about their disability before the interview to avoid an employers' surprise, discomfort or sense that an applicant has hidden his or her disability. This can be done in a letter, on a job application or on the telephone.
- Some people prefer to tell the employer about a visible disability after an interview is set up. This reduces the chance of not getting the interview because of a disability. If needed, the applicant can ask about accessibility at this time, especially if it is necessary to conduct an interview.

Example:

“Before we meet, I want to mention that I use a wheelchair. I feel certain I can do the job, but I need to make sure I can get into your office.”

- Talk to other people with disabilities about how they handle this issue and when they told their employers about their impairments. Disabled persons’ organizations, job placement agencies and special service organizations for people with disabilities should have staff to give you advice that is relevant for your particular country or job market. Employers who have hired disabled persons may also be of help.

The next Section “Interviewing for a Job” further discusses how to deal with employers’ questions and concerns about your disability.

EXERCISE 6.5: CONTACTING AN EMPLOYER IN PERSON

You need to be prepared to contact employers in person. To get ready, ask your job-seeking partner to help you.

- Identify an employer or job lead that interests you.
- If you have a disability, decide how you will handle telling the employer.
- Role play your approach to the employer (your partner acts as the employer).
- Evaluate your performance and practice until you are comfortable with it.
- Switch roles to see what it feels like to be the employer.

Pre-Employment Testing

Some employers may require that you take a test as part of the interview process. The test can be simple, like a typing test or paper and pencil tests or short computer-based tests. Larger or multinational companies are more likely to test for knowledge, ability and personality. Smaller companies or employers may just ask you to do something simple like a typing or literacy test, if they ask you to take any tests. Consider if you will need any adjustments or accommodations related to your disability to be able to complete such tests.

If an employer contacts you about testing, make sure you tell them about your impairment and any assistance you may need, such as additional time or specific equipment.

Testing can be frightening the first time you do it. If you plan to apply for jobs with multinational companies, you should practice these tests beforehand. See Section 9 “Useful Websites” in this guide for some online testing sites where you can practice on some of these tests.






**You have learned how to locate and respond to job leads.
Now it's time to learn how to interview for a job.**

Interviewing for a Job

A too modest man goes hungry.

Ethiopian proverb

The purpose of every step in the job-seeking process is to get a job interview. In the interview, you have a chance to sell yourself to the employer **and** to learn more about the job. In this section, you will:

-  learn how to prepare for a job interview;
-  review a typical interview format;
-  consider how to answer common and difficult questions.

Preparing for a Job Interview

Job interviews can be formal or casual, long or brief, easy or difficult. Being prepared will help you make a good impression and will reduce your nervousness, no matter what type of job interview you have. Here are some ways to prepare.

- Choose suitable, comfortable clothes and attend to personal grooming. Generally, you should dress a little better for the job interview than you would be expected to dress every day on the job. Your clothes do not need to be new or stylish, but they should be clean and in good condition.
- Find out all you can about the job and the employer before the interview.
- Know exactly where the interview will be held, how you will get there and the name of the person who will conduct the interview. You should plan to arrive early. This is particularly important if you have a disability that makes it difficult for you to get around.

- Assemble clean copies of your job-seeking documents and carry a pen and notebook with you.
- Turn off your mobile phone if you have one. You should not allow yourself to be distracted during the interview.
- Be prepared to explain your qualifications for the job and answer typical interview questions. Role play before your interview with your job-seeking partner.
- Be prepared to tell the employer about your disability in a positive way, if you plan to tell him or her.
- Be prepared to discuss with the employer what adjustments or particular equipment you might need to accommodate your disability, if you need such accommodations.
- Know what questions you want to ask of the employer.
- If you are unable to make the interview, get in touch with the employer as soon as you can to reschedule, but avoid doing so unless absolutely necessary.

The Job Interview Process

The start of a job interview is similar to a telephone conversation or contacting an employer in person. (You may want to re-read Section 6 “Finding and Responding to Job Openings”.)

Here are the steps in the interview process.

- Greet the employer and use his or her name or a polite greeting if you do not know the name yet.
- Introduce yourself clearly. Shake hands or make another greeting and eye contact according to local customs.

- Explain that you are there to interview and name the job. If someone referred you, name the person.

Example:

“Good morning Mrs Hattori. My name is Shin Shisaki and I am here to interview for the machine operator job. Mr Gito referred me to you.”

- Wait for a response and for the employer to invite you to take a seat before you sit down.

The employer may begin by asking friendly questions (e.g. about where you are from, the weather, etc.) or by talking about the job right away. During the beginning of the interview, let the employer talk or ask you questions about your abilities and qualifications.

Sometimes, especially in large companies or for certain types of jobs, you will be interviewed by a team of people, called a selection panel. These people may represent different sections of the company you will work with if you are hired. They will probably ask you the same types of questions an individual employer would ask. However, they may ask you specific questions about how they would interact with you and what they would expect from you. Do not be concerned if several people are seated in the room; introduce yourself to all of them in the same manner.

Here are some other tips for interviews.

- If necessary, you can ask questions to clarify what is being said or to clarify the job duties. For example: *“Could you tell me about the machines you use in this company?”* or *“What software packages do you use for accounting?”*

You should wait until the employer stops discussing the job or questioning you before you ask about hours, salary and benefits. It is best to ask about salary and benefits last; you don't want to appear too concerned about money.

- If you have a disability or a specific need (e.g. working on the first floor or concerns about a particular piece of equipment) discuss them after you have fully explained your qualifications as they directly apply to the job. Some people wait until a job offer is made; they do not want their specific needs to influence the chance of an offer. Whatever you decide, do not ask for more than is required for you to do the job.
- At the end of the interview, ask when a hiring decision will be made and how you will be notified. Find out if you should call back or come by for the results. Thank the interviewer and confirm your interest in the job before you leave.

You could send a brief thank you note after the interview. This can be done with a simple email or hand written card or note sent to the person or panel who interviewed you. Sending a card or note may not be standard practice in your country, but such small things can set you apart from others and can help make your application stronger with a potential employer.

Job Interview Questions

There are a number of interview questions an employer could ask. Some will be factual, about your skills and qualifications, or what jobs you have done in the past. Some interview questions will be more targeted to getting an idea of how you will apply your skills to this particular job, and how you will behave in certain situations.

Part of your preparation should include thinking about the types of questions that the employer might ask, and how you will answer them. There are some interview questions in this guide, but you should also ask your friends and family, and employers or specialists from disabled persons' organizations or job placement agencies about typical interview questions in the area you wish to work in.

Example Answers to Common Interview Questions

1. *“Tell me about yourself.”*

In answering this question you should briefly provide an overview of your qualifications for the job and include personal aspects that might be relevant, such as volunteer experience or hobbies.

2. *“Why do you want to work here?”*

You should be well prepared for this question by doing research into the company or organization and the job before the interview. You should answer this question by explaining why you want to work for the company and highlight your experience that is relevant to this specific position or the company.

For example, if you are interviewing for a sales position in a large company you might say: *“While at University, I worked in a small mobile phone shop selling phones. I really liked this job and realized that I am good with people and at selling. I want to continue in sales and marketing and I know your company offers the best training package. I think I can benefit the company and develop my skills at the same time.”*

3. *“What did you do on your last job?”*

To answer this question you should use active verbs to describe your key responsibilities. Use real examples of tasks and responsibilities. Focus on achievements, not only tasks. For example: *“I was the accounting assistant and I was responsible for all basic accounting and bookkeeping tasks. During my time working there I re-organised all the accounting files, both paper and electronic, making it much quicker to find relevant files.”*

4. *“Have you ever been fired from a job? Why?”*

If you have been fired, then you should be honest. The employer can easily find out if you have lied. Make the experience of being fired a positive one. Talk about how you have learned from the experience and that you have addressed and improved the weakness that led to you being fired. For example: *“On my last job, I was asked to leave because my skills were not good enough. I have been taking some additional accounting courses and as you can see from my records, I got good grades and am now ready to do a better job. I have also learned to ask for help if I don’t know how to do something.”*

5. *“Do you have any health problems or disabilities?”*

In some countries it is illegal for an employer to ask you if you have a disability. If this is the case in your country then you do not have to answer this question. However, you may prefer to say: *“I have no health problems or disabilities that affect my ability to do this job.”* (If this is the case!)

If you have a visible disability you should explain to the employer as positively as possible about your disability and how you plan to do the job successfully. Remember that health and disability are not the same thing. Most disabled people are in good health, though they may have a disability. For example: *“You may have noticed that I have a limp. I have an artificial leg. However, I know I can do this gas station job. I work on my own car and help my family and friends with their cars all the time.”*

6. *“Do you have any questions to ask us?”*

The employer may invite you to ask questions at the end of the interview. This can be a good opportunity to ask about salary, benefits, staff training and development opportunities at that company, or to ask about specific equipment or software used by the company. For example: *“I am very interested in working here. Can you tell me what the salary level is and what benefits you offer?”*

Here are some specific tips for job interviews.

DO

- listen carefully;
- ask for clarification if you don't understand the question clearly;
- give yourself time to think before answering;
- speak in a clear voice that can be heard;
- turn off your mobile phone;
- use specific, real examples from your life to illustrate your answer.

DON'T

- chew gum, smoke or wear excessive jewellery or clothes with messages that could be offensive;
- ask about salary and conditions too early in the interview;
- try to make the interviewers feel sorry for you because you have a disability.

Stressing the Positive, Even When It is Difficult

In some cultures, particularly in Asia, people are taught to be modest. In a job interview, however, it is important to speak positively about yourself.

You need to stress your abilities and skills, not what you can't do or don't know. Negative experiences from your past can be an opportunity to say something positive about yourself. If you have made mistakes in the past, such as having broken the law, a good approach to deal with the mistake is to admit to it, explain what you learned from the experience and stress that you now are ready to work. If you have had some problems that affected your work, such as a family or emotional or substance abuse problem, you need to explain that the problem is under control and then add positive statements about yourself.

Here are some ways to deal with tough interview questions or an employer's concerns about your qualifications or ability to do the job.

- Be honest, positive and brief (don't dwell on limitations), acknowledge your limitations and emphasise your strengths.

Examples:

"No, I have never been employed, but while in school, I tended the grounds on a regular basis and was responsible and did a good job."

"Although I have never worked, I know that it is important to be dependable and to work hard. I will do the best that I can."

- Use a negative event to say something positive about yourself.

Examples:

“Although my shop did not succeed, I learned the value of having dependable employees and I will do a good job for you. I have the qualifications for this job and want to work for a growing company like yours.”

“Yes, I did lose my first job. I was young and I didn’t understand what it meant to have a job. I learned from the experience and now I know better. I will work hard to prove myself.”

- Explain employer concerns positively.

Example:

“Even though I did not finish school, I can read well and calculate quickly. I am confident I can read and check the shipping orders.”

- If you don’t have a particular skill, stress your ability to do the job and, if appropriate, your desire to learn.

Examples:

“I am good at reading instruction manuals. I have taught myself to use several software packages. Although I don’t know how to use that specific one, I would like to learn how to use it. I am a fast learner.”

“I’m currently improving my reading and writing skills at night school, and after reviewing the job duties I am confident that I have the skills for this job right now. I will be a good worker for you.”

Dealing with Disability and Difference

Many employers feel uncomfortable talking about a disability. If you have a visible disability or one that will affect your job performance, you should bring it up in the job interview, or before. Don't wait for the employer to address it. Once you introduce the topic, he or she will be more likely to ask questions or express concerns.

It is important that the employer's concerns are addressed. You do not want to miss a job opportunity because the employer assumed you could not do the job, or had questions that he or she did not feel comfortable discussing.

Here are some tips for raising the issue of disability.

- Mention your disability in a natural and positive way.
- Educate the employer and try to dispel common myths or fears.
- Stress your ability to do the job.
- Anticipate employer concerns and mention them.

Examples:

"I know sometimes that people have concerns about hiring a person with a disability. Do you have any questions about my disability? I would be glad to answer them."

"Since I use a wheelchair, you may wonder how I would get to work every day. I have a modified three wheel motorbike and my wheelchair fits on the back. I will have no problem getting here or moving around the factory."

“Since I am blind, you may wonder how I will do this job. I have been trained at the rehabilitation centre to operate this equipment. May I show you?” (Later) “Do you have any other concerns about my being blind?”

“Although I am unable to use my legs, I can still weld. I can transfer from my wheelchair to sit on a chair and work from a lower workbench. During my training course I was as fast and accurate in welding as my non-disabled classmates.”

“On my last job, my employer wrote up brief work orders every day for the necessary repairs, even though I can read lips.”

“Many people think that people who are Deaf cannot read or write. I can read and write as well as anyone who has completed secondary school.”

“It may take me longer than most people to learn how to do a job, but once I learn, I will not forget. I am a hard worker.”

“I know that I don’t look very strong and healthy, but in my previous job my attendance was better than most of the other employees, and I only had two days off work sick with the flu.”

You could handle other differences, such as age or gender, in a similar manner.

Examples:

“I notice that most of your workers are male. You may wonder how a female will get along in the plant. In my last job, I was the only female operator and worked well with everyone.”

“I know I am older than most of the people on the job, but I get along with people of any age. Because of my past experience, I will be able to learn this job quickly. I have worked for many years and know what it means to do a good job.”

How to Talk to an Employer about Your Specific Needs

All workers need a place to work and equipment and tools to do their job effectively. As a person with a disability, you may need a slightly adapted work space or tools. Such needs are called an **accommodation**. An accommodation can refer to a need for equipment, a changed working space or furniture (such as a lowered work bench) or a change in working schedule. Sometimes, a different method of communication or training is needed. The interview is the best time to explain to the employer what your needs are, or to explain that you don't need any specific equipment or changes to the workplace.

International research shows that most people with disabilities don't need any changes or accommodations to do their jobs effectively, but some do. Many employers assume that a disabled person will need expensive assistive equipment or changes to the workplace. This means that you may have to educate employers in the interview about your disability and what specific requirements you may or may not have.

Examples:

“As you can see, I use a wheelchair. However, at work, I normally transfer to a regular chair so I can sit comfortably at the desk. As your office has an elevator from the parking lot, it won't be a problem for me to ride by three-wheeler to work and transfer to a wheelchair to come up to the office.”

“Although I use crutches to walk, this won't affect my work. I can walk up stairs and move around the shop easily.”

In some countries employers are legally required to make reasonable adjustments to the workplace to enable a person with a disability to do the job effectively. There may be financial or other assistance available for employers to make these accommodations.

How to Negotiate a Workplace Accommodation

Here are some tips for discussing the need for a workplace accommodation.

- Explain the change that you need as clearly and simply as possible, use an example of how a previous employer made this change, or how you do this at home.
- If the need will benefit other employees, point it out. For example, a wider aisle will help everyone.
- Educate the employer and try to dismiss common myths or fears.
- Stress your ability to do the job.
- Anticipate employer concerns and mention them. For example, the employer might be worried about the cost of the equipment.

Here are some tips and examples for raising the issue of an accommodation with the employer.

- Job-seeker: *“You may be wondering if I will be able to use the sewing machines in this factory. I had no problem using the industrial sewing machines at my vocational training centre. If you are concerned, I could have a look at the factory floor and then I can tell you exactly if changes will be necessary.”*
- Job-seeker with impaired hearing: *“You may be concerned about how I would communicate with other employees and supervisors. I can read and write so I normally use notes to communicate.”*
- Job-seeker: *“I don’t normally require any changes to do my job effectively other than a Western style toilet, preferably with a railing to help me transfer from my wheelchair to the toilet. Does this company have a Western toilet available? The door needs to be wide enough as well.”*

Employer: *“Yes, we have Western style toilets and one has a wide door already.”*

Job-seeker: *“If we could install a railing I can give you the name of a builder who can install railings which will meet the requirements of the building code, and should cost only around USD200.”*

Here are some tips for explaining assistive equipment.

- *“As I am blind, I need specific software to use the computer. However, this is available for free from the local Blind Association and I already have a copy. If I am successful in getting this job, I can bring the software and install it myself.”*
- *“I only have one arm, but I have learned to type using a regular computer. I can also use a regular telephone; however, it is easier for me to have a headset because that means I can take telephone messages more easily. Headsets are not expensive.”*

EXERCISE 7.1: A JOB INTERVIEW ROLE PLAY

The best way to learn to handle common and difficult questions is to role play job interviews and to go to as many interviews as possible. Here is how to set up a role play.

- Select a job that interests you from the newspaper classified advertisements, internet site or some other source.
- Ask your job-seeking partner to play the role of the employer.
- Dress as you would for the real job interview. If possible do the role play in a setting similar to where a real interview would take place.
- Conduct the role play based on some of the questions suggested in this guide or on others that you think might be asked.
- Go through the entire process seriously, and ask your partner to change the way he or she interacts with you with each role play. Some interviewers are strong, while some seem disinterested, or may seem busy. Practice in different situations so you can respond to different people confidently.
- Review your strong and weak points of the interview after the role play.
- Repeat the role play and keep trying to improve. If you or a friend has a video camera, tape the interview so that you can watch it later and see how you did.



**You have just learned how to interview for a job.
Now it's time to learn how to organize your job search.**

Organizing the Job Search

*Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it.
Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now.*

Goethe, German poet

You now know how to go about looking for a job. If you have completed the exercises in this guide, you have already begun the process. In this section you will:

- ✍ learn one way to organize your job search;
- ✍ explore ways to remain hopeful even if you are not getting results.

EXERCISE 8.1: ORGANIZING YOUR JOB SEARCH

Your last exercise is to get organized. Here is an easy way.

- Select a geographic location where you want to work.
- Use the job resources listed in Sections 3 and 6 to find job and employer leads that fit your job goal.
- Start writing, calling or visiting employers.
- Set a goal to make a certain number of contacts per week.
- Use the Employer Contact Sheet at the end of the guide to keep a record of the employers you contact and your next steps.
- Keep a diary or calendar of what you need to do each day.
- Don't give up hope!

Remaining Hopeful

Most people contact many employers and apply for many jobs before they get hired. Job seeking can be discouraging; however, in order to sell yourself, you need to stay positive.

Here are some ideas to maintain a positive approach to job seeking.

- Celebrate your successes, no matter how small.
- Talk to your partners, friends, family members or a counsellor about what you have tried, and what has not worked.
- Review your job-seeking documents with your partner to improve them.
- Do something that makes you feel good.
- Talk to a job-seeker who has succeeded in getting hired.
- If you have been interviewed and were unsuccessful, contact the employer and ask him or her for feedback to improve next time.
- Organize a group of job-seekers and help one another.

Making Changes and Moving Forward

If you don't succeed in finding a job as quickly as you want, you can change your plan or re-assess your career goal. Whatever you do, don't give up or lose hope.

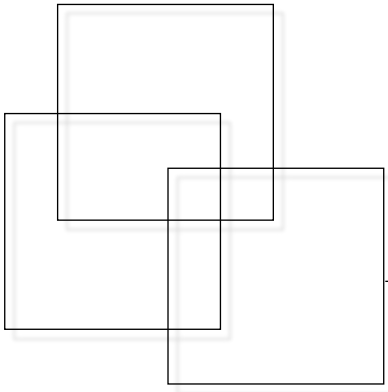
When you do succeed in getting a job, the learning is not over. Keeping a job is another set of skills. Review the list of positive traits and behaviours in Section 2 to help you stay on the job. Don't forget about increasing your skills or advancing your career once you have a job.

This guide can help you throughout your career. It's important to keep learning, and when you have more work experience and knowledge you may want to move on to a different job. This guide can help you, not just with your first job, but throughout your working life. Continue to refer to *Getting Hired* and keep an open mind about future opportunities.

Whatever happens, keep believing in yourself.



**You have just finished *Getting Hired*.
Now it's time to go job seeking and get hired.**



Appendices



Useful Websites

General Information about Employment and People with Disabilities

The ILO's disability programme in Asia and the Pacific, *AbilityAsia*, provides information, resources and a list of publications related to various disability issues in the region.

www.ilo.org/abilityasia

The National Centre for Promotion of Employment for People with Disabilities, India includes information about many issues related to employment for people with disabilities in India, including laws and policies.

www.ncpedp.org

The Job Accommodation Network, United States includes a lot of useful information about how to make reasonable accommodations for different kinds of disabilities.

www.jan.wvu.edu

Disabled Peoples International – Asia Pacific Region (DPI-AP) includes news, information, reports and publications relevant to people with disabilities in the Asia-Pacific region.

www.dpiap.org

Information about Labour Laws and Policies

The *AbilityAsia* website links to relevant laws and policies for many Asian and Pacific countries.

www.ilo.org/abilityasia

Search for the Ministry of Labour in your country for more detailed information about labour laws and policies. Some links can be found on the *AbilityAsia* website already referenced.

Selected Recruitment Websites

Jobs Database has listings of jobs in Australia, China, India, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Taiwan and Thailand. It also includes information for job-seekers. (English only.)

www.jobsdb.com/default.htm

Job Street is one of the largest online job sites in Asia and the Pacific with sites for Malaysia, Singapore, Philippines, India, Indonesia, Bangladesh, Japan and Vietnam. It also has a site specifically for people with disabilities.

www.my.jobstreet.com

jobs4disabled.jobstreet.com (Malaysia only currently.)

Thailand Jobs Database. (Thai and English.)

th.jobsdb.com/TH/EN/V6HTML/Home/default

Vietnam Works is the largest recruitment site in Vietnam. (Vietnamese and English.)

www.vietnamworks.com

Jobs Ahead is a recruitment site for India. (English only.)

www.jobsahead.com

Australian Job Search is the government-sponsored recruitment site in Australia.

www.jobsahead.com

China HR is the largest online recruitment site in China. (English and Chinese.)

www.chinahhr.com

Monster.com is one of the largest online recruiting companies in the world. It has sites in a number of Asian countries:

Hong Kong www.monster.com.hk

Singapore www.monster.com.sg

India www.monsterindia.com

Job Information and Recruitment Websites Specifically for People with Disabilities

The Business Advisory Council Cambodia has a jobs database for people with disabilities and a range of information.

www.bac.org.kh

The Employers Forum of Ceylon is a very active employers' organization promoting recruitment of people with disabilities. The site also includes a database of job-seekers.

www.empfed.lk/employment

Jobs for Disabled in India includes a range of information for job-seekers with disabilities, as well as a database of jobs.

www.jobs4disabled.com

Job Street Malaysia has a specific site for jobs for people with disabilities.

jobs4disabled.jobstreet.com

SHL Solutions offers pre-employment testing for employers. Their site also has free practice tests. (English, French, German, Italian, Spanish, Danish, Dutch, Norwegian, Finnish, Swedish, and Japanese).

www.shl.com/shl/en-int



Personal Data Sheet

The type of information requested on application forms will differ among countries. The most important thing to remember in completing any form is to read it carefully and to answer all items completely and accurately. This Personal Data Sheet will help you to have all relevant, accurate information with you.

Instructions: Complete this form and use it to complete job applications, online applications, letters to employers and résumés.

I. GENERAL INFORMATION	
Name:	Telephone:
Address:	Mobile phone:
	Email address:
Date of birth:	Place of birth:
Identification number:	Marital status:
Number and names of dependents:	
II. EDUCATION	
A. Primary	
Name of school:	
Location:	
Highest level completed:	
B. Post-Primary/Secondary	
Name of school:	
Location:	
Courses taken:	
Dates:	
Qualifications:	

C. Post-Secondary/Trade School	
Name of school:	
Location:	
Courses taken:	
Dates:	
Qualifications:	
D. College/University	
Name of college/university	
Courses taken:	
Dates:	
Qualifications:	
E. Other courses or certificates etc	
Name of training provider:	
Courses taken:	
Dates:	
Qualifications:	
III. EMPLOYMENT HISTORY	
A. Employer	
Name:	
Address:	Employed from: to:
Supervisor:	Telephone:
Job title:	Email:
Description of duties:	Salary:
Special equipment operated/achievements:	
Reason for leaving:	

B. Employer	
Name:	
Address:	Employed from: to:
Supervisor:	Telephone:
Job title:	Email:
Description of duties:	Salary:
Special equipment operated/achievements:	
Reason for leaving:	
<i>NOTE: Attach additional job information on a separate sheet of paper.</i>	
IV. REFEREES	
<i>(List at least three referees, including name, title, contact information and how long you have known them.)</i>	
Name:	Title:
Address:	Telephone:
	Email:
Name:	Title:
Address:	Telephone:
	Email:
Name:	Title:
Address:	Telephone:
	Email:

List any other information here that you may need to complete your job application.



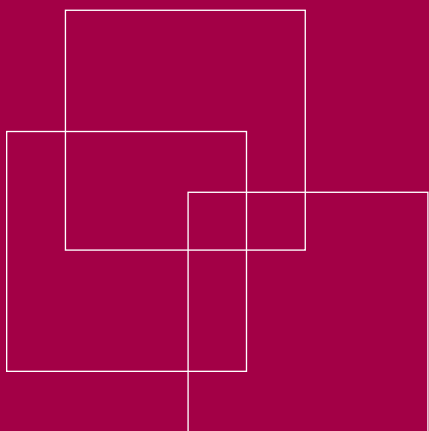
A Word of Thanks

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INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

10th Floor, UN Building
Rajdamnern Nok Avenue
PO Box 2-349, Rajdamnern
Bangkok 10200, Thailand

Tel: +662 288 1792

Fax: +662 288 3043

Email: disability@ilo.org

Websites: www.ilo.org
www.ilo.org/abilityasia
www.ilo.org/employment/disability