

Guiding Youth Careers

**A Handbook for those
who help young
jobseekers**

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Three helpful resources

This *Handbook* is designed for use by guidance counselors and practitioners, Public Employment Service Office (PESO) managers and staff, parents, peers, and all those from whom young jobseekers get career advice. It is intended to help users in advising young jobseekers, particularly new graduates, school leavers, and out-of-school and unemployed youth in their job search.

It is best used in tandem with the *Minute Guide for Young Jobseekers*, a self-help guide on job search for the same target group of young jobseekers.

The *Handbook* explains the principles and practices in the *Minute Guide* in greater detail so the youth can have help with whatever questions they may have in the course of going through the *Minute Guide*.

Another companion resource material is a set of occupational flyers on 20 occupations identified by the National Manpower Summit to be in demand for the next three to five years.



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Foreword

Various literature show that parents, teachers, and peers play a tremendous role in coaching a young individual gain and maintain a solid course toward “familiar waters and known lands.” Perhaps many of them consult others and check the internet.

This Handbook is the realization of the vision and diligent efforts of many people who are committed to supporting “coaches” deliver quality services to young women and men in exploring career options and prospects. The goal is to enhance capacities of “coaches” to help young people identify the things they need to learn to achieve the level of personal and professional success they deserve.

It is a valuable first step to establishing the counselor, parent, friend or anyone whose interest is into guiding young men and young women — as an “ally” or “companion” in the career exploration process, yet empowering the youth, the recipients of formal and informal counseling move forward on their own with new information about themselves.

This can be a stand alone resource or complement *Minute Guide to Young Jobseekers* designed to support “companions” expand the young person’s knowledge of one’s self and prospects. In using it one can benefit from an opportunity to understand what “success” means to the other person without really asking for it since both parties go through the same process.

Special thanks to the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) for supporting the ILO’s Promoting Youth Employment Project in the Philippines (PYEP), the Skills and Employability Department (EMP/SKILLS) Ms. Carmela I. Torres for technical inputs and cost-sharing for this product

line; the PYEP Project Staff for co-managing this product and the Department of Labor and Employment - Bureau of Local Employment for managing the delivery of this valuable resource.

Finally, I would like to express appreciation to select young women and young men, Public Employment Service Office (PESO) managers, career guidance practitioners and other contributing parties from the municipalities of Angono, Rizal; Guiguinto, Bulacan; Baliuag, Bulacan; and Sto. Tomas, Batangas; provinces of Bulacan and Cavite and cities of Makati, Mandaluyong, Marikina, Muntinlupa and Quezon, for their valuable comments/inputs on this book.

We at the ILO Office hope that this Handbook helps you help young men and young women navigate the world of work and life with greater ease. As always, we wish counselors and job-seekers alike, perseverance and success in your career and life intentions!

Linda Wirth-Dominice
Director
ILO SRO Manila

Foreword



Department of
Labor and
Employment

Around the world, countries with largely young populations are challenged to curb high unemployment rates among the youth. The Philippines faces the same situation as the Filipino youth make up most of the country's unemployed and those in the formal economy.

Unemployment in the Philippines, however, cannot be purely attributed to the scarcity of jobs. On the contrary, despite the surge in employment opportunities both in the local and overseas labor markets, a lot of job openings remain unfilled and thousands of jobs offered in the job fairs fail to get enough applicants. Major players in the labor market have lately recognized that the problem may actually be a result of a mismatch between the skills needed for available jobs and the skills possessed by those seeking work or a geographic mismatch between locations of job openings and job seekers.

It is against this backdrop that the Department of Labor and Employment embarks on a career advocacy and guidance program where Public Employment Service Offices (PESOs) and other stakeholders will be actively engaged in guiding young people to make the right employment choices. With this **Guiding Youth Careers Handbook**, counselors will have an effective tool so they can provide relevant and accessible information and guidance services that fit the needs of our young people. It is hoped that the Handbook will be used by counselors in assisting young jobseekers in their career and job search.

The Department would like to acknowledge the valuable contribution of Ms. Loree Cruz-Mante, who is a Consultant of this Project and her capable group of researchers who painstakingly worked to come up with this **Guiding Youth Careers Handbook** to become a reality.

The Department also expresses its sincerest appreciation to the International Labour Organization, Sub-Regional Office in Manila, for its support and contribution to make this project possible.

Arturo D. Brion
Secretary
Department of Labor and Employment

Preface

Many young jobseekers often find themselves scared stiff, anxious and consequently debilitated at the mere thought of looking for a job. This is primarily because they are ill-prepared to embark on their job search and hardly equipped with the necessary knowledge, attitudes and skills required to look for a job. As a consequence, they are unable to find work or they land the wrong jobs in the wrong companies for the wrong reasons. The mismatch that follows creates new problems for young jobseekers for whom job satisfaction will be elusive and difficult to achieve.

Very often, young jobseekers will consult a trusted person with questions about their job search and their careers in general. Very often, too, those whom they approach also lack the capability to provide meaningful career advice. They are therefore unable to provide the real help young jobseekers need at this stage in their lives.

This *Handbook* aims to help all those to whom young jobseekers go for career help, advice and guidance. It is my hope that through the processes suggested in these pages, readers will find themselves more competent and confident in helping the young who seek guidance from them. I had fun writing and doing the graphic design of the book and its cover, and hope that I have somewhat conveyed the fun which is also at the core of helping the youth.

I am grateful to the International Labour Organization, Sub-regional Office for South-East Asia and the Pacific, and the Skills and Employability Department, particularly Ms. Carmela Torres, Ms. Linda Wirth-Dominice, Mr. Aurelio Parisotto, Ms. Maria Asuncion Ortiz, and Ms. Ma. Teresa T. Cruz for their support and encouragement. I also wish to thank the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE), particularly Secretary Arturo D. Brion, Undersecretary Danilo P. Cruz, and Assistant Secretary Ma. Teresa M. Soriano; and the Bureau of Local Employment (BLE), particularly Director Jalilo dela Torre

and his staff; former Directors Ma. Luisa Gigette S. Imperial-Turla for engaging me for this laudable project, and Ma. Celeste M. Valderrama who started conceiving this project during her term.

My gratitude to my project team, the late Raquel DC Arpoja, Sheryll Salvador-Azusano, and James S. Mante for their diligence and reliability. Thank you to James for facilitating the two pilot tests for this *Handbook* and its companion *Minute Guide*.

Thank you to all the PESO managers and staff, school guidance counselors, youth leaders and representatives, and other stakeholders who attended the pilot tests for their enthusiastic acceptance of the resource materials and very useful observations, comments, and suggestions.

May this *Handbook* be a constant companion that you can easily pull out of your bookshelf, bag or backpack whenever needed. It is also my wish that the privilege of providing career advice to the youth will be one that delivers the “helper’s high” that will enable you to do your appointed tasks with exhilaration, joy, and tireless dedication.

Loree Cruz-Mante
Manila, August 2007

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How to use this Handbook

This *Handbook* is intended for use by those who help young jobseekers and who, because of the nature either of their work or their personal relationship with young jobseekers, are in a position to influence the youth in their career and job search. It is designed for easy reference by both trained professionals and significant but untrained influencers, such as parents and peers.

Designed to provide user-friendly access to information about the job search process, it is written in an easy style and presented in a light, user-friendly graphic design. It includes inspiring articles that deal with the emotional and psychological aspects of job search, and useful internet links that jobseekers can use to launch their search. It also provides a look-see into entrepreneurship as a career option.

It is best used together with the *Minute Guide for Young Jobseekers*, a handy self-help guide written specifically for young jobseekers, particularly new graduates, school leavers, out-of-school and unemployed youth. It is highly recommended that counselors suggest the *Minute Guide* to their counselees so that there would be a shared terminology and methodology for approaching the job search process. This shared understanding will make the helping relationship move forward with a greater degree of ease and success.

You, the career counselor

Career guidance is best understood in terms of what it provides the end-user of the advice. It is often defined as “services and activities intended to assist individuals, at any age and at any point throughout their lives, to make



educational, training and occupational choices and to manage their careers.”

(Ellen Hansen, Career guidance: A resource book for low- and middle-income countries, International Labour Office, 2006.)

In other words, career guidance is a helping profession. It is client-

centered and focused on the needs of the one receiving the advice, not the one giving it. Counselors thus use their skills, training, experience, and even personality, to help counselees in making informed decisions affecting their career in particular and life in general.

In highly-developed countries, career guidance provides five basic categories of service:

- Career information – provides information on occupations; employment opportunities; labor market trends and employment scenarios; educational programs, institutions, and opportunities; career services; and job opportunities, both local and global
- Career education – provides career planning and decision-making; labor market information and other information related to careers and work skills
- Career counseling – provides one-on-one or small group help on role clarifications, career decision-making, self-assessment and self-definition, aspirations and dreams

- Employment counseling – provides help with setting career goals, writing resumes, interviewing skills and the like, all such activities designed to help the person define the characteristics of the career or job he/she is looking for, assess suitability for it, and identify skills gaps that can be addressed by personal development efforts; and
- Job placement – provides actual job search services intended to connect jobseekers and job providers.

All these five service categories are often obtained separately from different sources, but it is often the career counselor who is called upon to provide them all at once. Because of this, career counselors should be familiar with all of them, even though their distinct capability is in the counselor role which has its own set of required skills for listening, empathy, analysis, and providing real help.

What is required of career counselors is that they know how to direct and refer their counselees to the proper venues where information or services can be obtained. They are not expected to be experts in labor market information, for example, but they should be able to explain what it means, how to use it, and where to go to find out more.

Understanding the Young Jobseeker

In order to help young people in their search for meaningful careers, it is important that counselors understand the context in which job search happens and the complex web of factors that influences job search and jobseekers.



Cultural factors. The young person seeking work is not the only one seeking work, i.e., family and friends are looking for a job alongside the jobseeker. This is a cultural reality of the job search scenario, given that families stand to benefit from the jobseeker's

success and may equally suffer the effects of continued unemployment.

Parents put their hope in a son or daughter whom they have sent to school, even if he/she is a school leaver. They feel they have a stake in the child's future and how it turns out. Many feel that providing for their children's education is a big investment which at some point must bring back returns.

This adds tremendous pressure on the jobseeker who has to find work within tight timelines, especially in poor families with only one income earner or none at all. A job must be found within the shortest time possible. The job and the income it will bring in for the family are a responsibility which the jobseeker must embrace as a matter of fact. The young jobseeker often represents the only hope there is for the family to be lifted up from its life of poverty.

Pressures thus abound for young jobseekers. These have far-reaching consequences on them. Parental pressures are probably the strongest, and are usually expressed in both blatant and subtle ways. For example, parents can say: "I thought that we graduated when you did. How come we are still not getting any help with the household expenses?" or "We're done with our obligations to you. It's your turn now." Such parental lines often have the effect of rousing embarrassment or shame in the young person, and consequently even anger, bitterness, and resentment. All these erode his/her self-worth, a necessary ingredient in successful job search.

Family and friends also contribute to the young people's anxieties by hinting at laziness, bad luck, or the loser mentality in their effort to push them to go faster in the job search. Sarcastic comments can have lasting effects on young jobseekers' confidence.

Being jobless is counter-cultural for many families. Job holders are considered the pride of the family as they bring in the much-needed cash for daily living and the means to buy the symbols of improving social status. Having a job is certainly also tied up with image issues.



Employment issues. Many jobseekers begin their search defeated. The grim unemployment statistics and employment scenario influence many to think in negative terms, perhaps also as a convenient excuse to explain their jobless status.



When one begins with such a mindset, then the prophecy fulfills itself. On the other hand, it is also true that people continue to find jobs despite the grim statistics. In fact, according to the March 2006 National Manpower Summit convened by the Department of Labor and Employment, it is jobs which are looking for people, not people looking for jobs.

One problem is that there is a distinct mismatch between education and what the market demands in terms of worker skills and competencies. Another is that far too many jobseekers are picky and ambitious and seek a high-profile entry into the job market.

Part of the job of career counselors is precisely to help their counselees to approach the search for a job with a positive stance which is both realistic and hopeful. To begin with the attitude that “the job market is so bad that I’ll never find a job” is downright defeatist. Is the alternative, then, not to even start looking?

Even as counselors should cheer their counselees on, they must also avoid painting picture-perfect scenarios for employment. A balance of realism and hopefulness would be healthy advice.

Personal issues. Counselors must help young jobseekers to begin with an honest assessment of who they are and what they offer. Many jobseekers have often an inaccurate picture of themselves, either thinking themselves superior or downplaying what they can do well. They are thus unable to sell themselves appropriately.

Understanding the Job Search Process

Career aspirations start way back in childhood. Early on, children have some vague notion of what work means. They see their parents dress up and leave the house to go to work. They see them come home tired and exhausted, but often full of stories to share, if not goodies to surprise them with. Or they may see their parents sitting around with the men in the corner store passing the hours over beer. They may hear their parents constantly arguing about the fact that one of them is jobless.

Whatever children see from their work environment influences their initial concept of what the world of work is all about.

Standing at the threshold of entering the world of work, however, is a far cry from the child's certainty when he/she says: "I want to be a teacher!" Young jobseekers are usually scared stiff about facing the adult world and need help to deal with their fears.

Counselors must understand that the job search process happens within a certain context that is characterized by cultural, employment, and personal factors. In addition, they must also understand the nature of the job search process itself.

The approach suggested in this Manual consists of four parts:

- Part One: Knowing where you've been
- Part Two: Knowing what you've got
- Part Three: Knowing where and how to look
- Part Four: Making the Deal

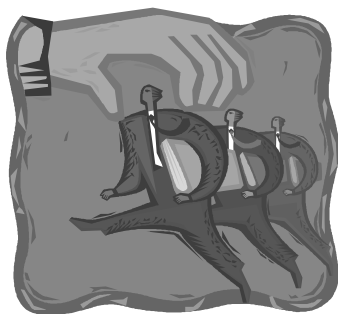
Each of the parts describes a set of activities that the young jobseeker must do in order to move forward in the search process. The parts are explained in detail in their appropriate sections.

The underlying premise of this four-part approach, especially for those who are school leavers, out-of-school, unemployed, and new entrants to the job market, is that looking for a job requires a structured methodology. It is not a



shotgun approach where hit-or-miss is the name of the game. It requires information and knowledge, discipline, a sense of urgency, and lots of patience.

This is not to say that people do not find jobs by simply giving out their resumes or answering every ad they see. They can find jobs this way and they do. But our increasingly competitive market requires more than just luck or daring. It requires that jobseekers come prepared to handle all kinds of



questions and challenges. Their resumes should be able to compete for attention on someone's desk. This kind of competition needs a well thought-out strategy to land the best job possible for an individual and not just what's available.

The whole process begins with making an honest attempt to understand one's past because this will greatly affect the search process. For example, many jobseekers are not prepared to explain why they are school dropouts or school leavers. If these issues remain unresolved within themselves in the first place, they will have a difficult time answering questions referring to their past. They can answer questions confidently only when they have fully understood and accepted what they have been through.

After young jobseekers have made sense of their past and have accepted it as it happened, they can then move into assessing who they are, what skills and talents they have, what motivates them, and what types of work environments they would best fit in.

From this assessment of what they've got and what they still need to acquire in terms of competencies, they then learn the processes involved in looking for a job. In this portion, young jobseekers will learn how to write a resume, how to prepare for an interview, how to research, where to look for both advertised and hidden jobs, and how to network.

The last part will equip young jobseekers with some facts about job offers, negotiating, and making a decision to accept an offer.

Providing Real Help

Career counselors play a critical role in helping young jobseekers as they make their transition to the working life. Because of their youth and inexperience, young jobseekers need the wisdom of significant adults who will help them through with sound advice.

If counselors are to provide real help, however, they must always remember that all their efforts should be centered on their young counselees. It is from their eyes that counselors should consider each one's unique situation. Counselors cannot live their counselees' lives for them and neither should they force their opinions on them. Rather they should guide their counselees sensitively to their own place of discovery, insight, and decision.

Real help happens when career counselors are able to empower their young counselees to take their career and their future into their own hands.



Part One

Knowing where you've been

All job searches begin with confidence. Confidence is a product of a healthy self-esteem and the ability to come to terms with one's personhood. Acceptance of who one is, recognition of what one can and cannot do, and a vision of what the future may look like—these are what enable jobseekers to go full speed in their search for a career, a job, even a life.

But how can jobseekers go about looking for a job when they lack the confidence to tell potential employers about themselves? School leavers and out-of-school youth, in particular, have circumstances that must be explained about why they left school. Young people who have graduated but have been unable to find jobs have to explain the time gap between graduation and employment. So do those who have worked before but are now looking again.

Coming to terms with one's reality is a crucial first step in the job search. It is the key to the confidence necessary to open doors to employment.



Young jobseekers must be aware of the need to deal with the past and perhaps to put closure to it. Young as they are, they must understand that life is lived in chapters and that their school chapter must have its own ending. The secret is to review it, learn from it, and plan how to explain it—first to themselves, and then to others.

In this part, counselors must help jobseekers through a three-step process:

1. list down the reasons why they stopped schooling
2. plan how to explain the past
3. memorize the script and practice delivering it

examples

.....

- “I had to stop schooling because we are poor. My family could not support me. That’s why I have to work so I can save enough to go back to school.”
- “I helped with the family business after graduation, but I now feel that I should pursue my own career.”
- “I graduated last year but it’s been difficult to find a job even though I have been looking hard. In the meantime, I’m involved in volunteer work.”

In helping jobseekers to review their past, it is critical that counselors avoid passing judgment. Jobseekers must be allowed to work through the emotional complexities in retelling their past. They must be made to feel free to recount the events that led to their present reality without fear of censure or ridicule. At this point, the idea is for counselors to clarify chronology, sequence and accuracy of facts, more than whys and wherefores.



After the recalling, jobseekers should be helped to plan how they will present their reasons. The script must be clear, unemotional and matter-of-fact. It is suggested that the script should contain:

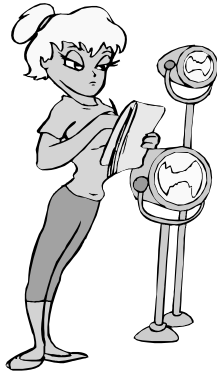
- the reasons for leaving school or the explanation for the time gap between graduation and work (or whatever else may be the situation)
- how time has been spent between school and now

- reasons for deciding to look for work

It is important to emphasize here that the script is written as it would be said.

Wrong: I will tell the interviewer that my parents did not have the means to support my education.

Right: "My parents did not have the means to support my education so I had to work instead so I could save up for tuition."



Memorizing the script is the next step. This may seem odd to many but it is still the best way to ensure that no detail will be left out and that the sequence will be followed properly. It is important that jobseekers spend time practicing their delivery so that it will eventually sound natural and not "scripted." The script actually helps them to

deal with the past. Soon they will come to realize that there are reasons to explain whatever happened and that the past must not be allowed to diminish their chances for a better future.

Part Two

Knowing what you've got

The Greek aphorism “Know thyself” and Shakespeare’s (Hamlet) “To thine own self be true” are two very appropriate things to remember in job search. Self-knowledge is key to looking for and finding the right job.



After jobseekers have learned to explain their past, they must then be guided through a process of assessing themselves. In this self-assessment, jobseekers will identify key aspects of themselves that are most important for their potential

employers to know.

These are:

- ② Skills, talents, abilities, competencies: What can you do? What are you capable of?
- ② Likes, interests, motivations, values: What will make you do your best? What drives you?
- ② Goals, dreams, ambitions: What do you aim for in life? What would you like to be? What would you like to do? What would you like to achieve?
- ② Best fit (preferred work conditions): What kind of career best suits you? In what kind of environment will you be most happy in?

Basic Competencies (or core work skills)

There are many ways to know what competencies a person has and how good he/she is at each one.

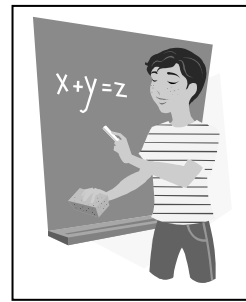
A useful way to assess competencies is by measuring oneself against a set of 20 basic competencies. This was developed by the Technical Education and Skills Development Authority (TESDA), in cooperation with the International Labour Organization (Sub-Regional Office for South-East Asia and the Pacific). For a more detailed explanation of the basic competencies, please see *Competency Standards*, ILO, 2006.

Basic competencies are defined as “non-technical skills (knowledge, skills and attitudes) that **everybody will need in order to perform** satisfactorily at work and in society and are considered portable and transferable irrespective of jobs and industrial settings.” There are 20 core work skills identified as follows:

basic competencies (core work skills)

1. **Receive and respond to workplace communication** – receive, respond and act on verbal and written communication.
2. **Work with others** – develop workplace relationship and contribute to workplace activities.
3. **Demonstrate work values** – demonstrating and living by desirable values and ethics in the workplace.
4. **Practice basic housekeeping procedures** - apply the basic housekeeping procedures.
5. **Participate in workplace communication** – gather, interpret and gather information in response to workplace communication.
6. **Work in team environment** – identify role and responsibility as a member of a team.
7. **Practice career professionalism** – promoting career growth and advancement.
8. **Practice occupational health and safety procedures** – comply with regulatory and organizational requirements for occupational health and safety.

9. **Lead workplace communication** – lead in the dissemination and discussion of ideas, information and issues in the workplace.
10. **Lead small teams** – including setting and maintaining team and individual performance standards.
11. **Develop and practice negotiating skills** – collect information in order to negotiate to a desired outcome and participate in the negotiation.
12. **Solve problems related to work activities** – solve problems in the workplace, including the application of problem-solving techniques, and to determine and resolve the root cause of problems.
13. **Use mathematical concepts and techniques** – application of mathematical concepts and techniques.
14. **Use relevant technologies** – selecting, sourcing and applying appropriate and affordable technologies in the workplace.
15. **Utilize specialized communication skills** – use specialized communication skills to meet specific needs of external and internal clients, conduct interviews, facilitate group discussions, and contribute to the development of communication strategies.
16. **Develop teams and individuals** – determine individual and team development needs and facilitate the development of the workgroup.
17. **Apply problem-solving techniques in the workplace** – apply the process of problem-solving and other problems beyond those associated directly with the process unit. Includes the application of structured processes and improvement tools.
18. **Collect, analyze and organize information** – process, analyze, interpret and organize workplace information and other relevant data.
19. **Plan and organize work** – outcomes required in planning and organizing work. May be applied to a small



independent operation or to a section of a large organization.

20. **Promote environmental protection** – adhering to environmental protection principles, strategies and guidelines.

It is important to emphasize the need for jobseekers to acquire these competencies as early as possible in their work life and to continue to increase proficiency through the years. Increasing one's competency base is one of the surest ways of ensuring that one will always have a place in the job market. The meaning of the so-called security of tenure has changed significantly through the years. The concept of lifelong employment with one company is no longer true in many cases.

In the past few years, security of tenure has given way to business strategic redirection and restructuring. This means that workers can no longer expect to stay in one company throughout their entire working life. They should therefore be ready to change jobs or even shift careers often, and this requires that they have a basket of skills that they can offer to employers. It is best to advise young jobseekers to enter the world of work with this mindset.

Another way to find out what skills someone possesses is by using the following framework which divides skills into four categories:

Skills, talents, abilities, competencies

- ✚ People skills – those that have to do with working with people, including serving, helping, influencing thinking and action, entertaining
- ✚ Data skills – those that have to do with facts, records, files, numbers, details, systems and procedures

- ⬇ Thing skills – those that have to do with building, maintaining, processing, handling equipment or machinery, physical, biological or chemical functions
- ⬇ Idea skills – those that have to do with abstractions, ideas, creative expression, problem solving

examples

People skills	Data skills	Thing skills	Idea skills
➤ leading ➤ selling ➤ teaching ➤ helping ➤ serving ➤ speaking ➤ counseling ➤ training	➤ computing ➤ tabulating ➤ analyzing ➤ planning ➤ posing ➤ researching ➤ testing ➤ checking	➤ repairing ➤ driving ➤ inspecting ➤ producing ➤ warehousing ➤ building ➤ machine work ➤ inspecting	➤ interpreting ➤ theorizing ➤ speculating ➤ predicting ➤ innovating ➤ anticipating ➤ discovering ➤ creating ➤ synthesizing ideas

Likes, interests, motivations, values

These are called drivers. They are those things that propel people to move and act. People will perform if they are motivated to do so because they like what they do, are interested in them, and are driven by deep values that they adhere to and hold dear.

There are generally five categories of values: personal, family, spiritual, humanitarian, and work or career values.

- Personal values have to do with values that are intrinsically important to an individual, such as moral fulfillment and recognition.
- Family values are those values that are handed down through generations and which are held collectively by families.

- Spiritual values have to do with those that concern one's concept of the spirit and the belief in a higher power that animates life in general.
- Humanitarian values are concerned with "other-centered" values that an individual holds as he/she relates to the human community.
- Work or career values relate to values in the practice of profession, at the workplace, or the place where business is carried out.

examples

- Personal values – moral fulfillment, recognition, earning big money, self-respect
- Family values – respect for elders, taking care of aging parents, keeping family name untainted
- Spiritual values – surrender, trusting God, forgiveness, prayer
- Humanitarian values – justice, helping the poor, protecting children at risk
- Work/career values – honesty, just wages, social protection, work-life balance

Goals, dreams, ambitions

It is important that jobseekers are able to envision a future that they want to work toward. These are what goals, dreams and ambitions are all about. Young jobseekers must be able to vividly imagine their ideal future and set goals that they want to reach at some future time. Goals provide an anchor that will direct young jobseekers to pursue directions that will lead them to fulfilling their dreams.



examples

- “I want to start my own trading business within five years using savings from my employment.”
- “I want to graduate with a degree in business management by 2010.”
- “I want to be a supervisor after three years of working in this company.”
- “I should be earning P____ in three years.”

Best fit (preferred work conditions)

Preferred work conditions are characteristics that describe what are perceived to be ideal conditions at work. These are the things that young jobseekers would like to see in their potential employer or organization. These conditions determine whether they will fit in the organization or not, whether there is a match between their values, interests and beliefs with that of the organization. Simply put, an individual will fit an organization if his/her preferred work conditions are met, and if personal values are aligned with organizational values. The organization must also see that the individual is able to provide what it requires in relation to the job, its workforce, and its corporate nature.

These preferences are of two types: tangible and intangible. Tangible factors are those that can be observed and measured, such as compensation, benefits, location, financial stability, status, and organization size, among others. Intangible factors are more difficult to determine and include organizational culture, type of boss or supervisor, corporate responsibility, and community involvement, among others. Both tangible and intangible factors are important in determining whether there is a match between organizational and personal needs.

Match and fit are crucial to satisfaction at work.

examples

- multinational company
- no night work/shift
- medical benefits
- work alone
- training opportunities
- no weekend work



The following table may help young jobseekers to identify their characteristics and have an idea of where they might fit best.

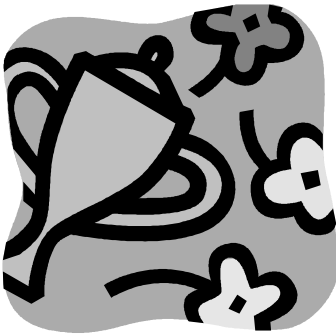
Instructions: Look at the characteristics listed in the second column and assess which set most describes you. Then see the third column for which types of jobs will most likely fit you given your identified category.

CATEGORIES	CHARACTERISTICS	JOB FIT
Realistic	▪ Athletic ▪ With mechanical abilities ▪ Prefers to work with objects, machines, tools, plants or animals or prefer outdoors in general ▪ Competent in reading blueprints, carpentry work, making mechanical drawings, using heavy equipment	▪ Engineer ▪ Architect ▪ Fish and game warden ▪ Forester ▪ Industrial arts teacher ▪ Pilot ▪ Military officer ▪ Enlisted personnel ▪ Crafts person ▪ Occupational therapist
Investigative	▪ Likes to observe, learn, investigate, analyze and solve problems ▪ Scientifically inclined	▪ Chemist ▪ Economist ▪ Physician ▪ Anthropologist ▪ Pathologist

CATEGORIES	CHARACTERISTICS	JOB FIT
Investigative (continued)	▪ Comfortable in using technical equipment ▪ Adept at using log tables, interpreting chemical formula	▪ Physicist ▪ Production planner ▪ Biologist ▪ Psychologist ▪ Research or system analyst ▪ Surgeon ▪ Dentist ▪ Engineer
Artistic	▪ Innovative or intuitive ▪ Prefers to work in unstructured situations ▪ Uses imagination and creativity ▪ Like playing musical instruments, singing, acting, making interpretative readings, debating, sketching	▪ Artist ▪ English teacher ▪ Musician ▪ Singer ▪ Actor ▪ Foreign language interpreter ▪ Philosopher ▪ Orchestra conductor ▪ Advertising executive ▪ Public relations specialist ▪ Fashion model ▪ Writer ▪ Reporter ▪ Photographer ▪ Interior decorator
Social	▪ Likes working with others ▪ Adept at informing, enlightening, helping, training, developing, curing or communicating	▪ Counselor ▪ Social service director ▪ Interviewer ▪ Teacher ▪ Educational administrator

CATEGORIES	CHARACTERISTICS	JOB FIT
Social (continued)	▪ Can explain things well to others ▪ Feels competent with peers older than self ▪ Can effectively plan community functions ▪ Good judge of personality ▪ Enjoys working as a volunteer	▪ Therapist ▪ Nurse ▪ Training director ▪ Recreation leader
Enterprising	▪ Influential ▪ Persuasive ▪ Can lead an organization for economic gain ▪ Tends to be elected into office ▪ Can supervise the work of others ▪ Has unusual energy or enthusiasm ▪ Good at getting people to do things their way ▪ Good in sales ▪ Has organized a club or organization ▪ Good debater ▪ Has started own business or service	▪ Manager ▪ Salesperson ▪ Market analyst ▪ Broker ▪ Personnel recruiter ▪ Contractor ▪ Insurance underwriter ▪ Salary administrator
Conventional	▪ Likes working with data ▪ Has clerical and numerical ability ▪ Carries things out in detail ▪ Can follow well on instructions of others	▪ Certified Public Accountant ▪ Banker ▪ Business teacher ▪ Financial expert ▪ Estimator

CATEGORIES	CHARACTERISTICS	JOB FIT
Convention (continued)	▪ Good in typing letters or papers ▪ Can keep financial records	▪ Clerk ▪ Office manager or department secretary ▪ Data processor ▪ Proofreader ▪ Credit manager ▪ Public administrator



Listing accomplishments

Accomplishments are a very important part of one's resume. They tell the target employer that the jobseeker has done these things in the past and that he/she is capable of repeating them in the next job.

In counseling those who are returning to work, counselors can let them list their work before their school accomplishments. This list should include things like being promoted at work even while the jobseeker was sending a younger sibling to school and taking care of sick parents. This shows that the jobseeker is focused and able to perform well at work despite his/her domestic concerns.

Young jobseekers who have just graduated from school should not feel uneasy about listing only school accomplishments (because they do not have work experience). The fact that they are new graduates does not diminish them and their achievements at school. These school accomplishments are important predictors of future performance at work.

Statements of achievement should be expressed in measurable and specific terms as much as possible. They must

indicate how the jobseeker has generated savings for the company or organization, how many manhours were saved because of a system he/she has created, positive consequences that have resulted from something that he/she did. Figures are impressive because they are objective measures of how a jobseeker has contributed his/her bit to the well-being of others. Particularly for organizations where bottomline is always an important area, specific indications of money and time saved because of a system or process the jobseeker has designed are always indicators of memorable performance that can be repeated by the jobseeker in different work scenarios.

Here are some examples of how accomplishments should be stated:

examples

"I was president of the Soccer Club and still graduated valedictorian in college."



"I was named Employee of the Year."

"I put myself through school while working as a utility man in a dental clinic."

"I was given an award for the Best Science Experiment when I was in third year college."

"I prevented a fire in the warehouse through my alertness and quick action."

"I received a commendation for cooperation as a member of the Sportsfest Committee."

Introducing yourself

It is best that young jobseekers are advised to plan a self-introduction that they can practice before they go for an interview. This is one way of eliminating some of the jitters of being asked about oneself. Anticipation, preparation and certainty about how jobseekers would like to be known by others is a crucial first step in being relaxed and in control when the actual interview situation happens.

Probably the most common question young jobseekers will be asked is: “Tell me about yourself.” They will have to be ready with an answer that represents them well – where they’ve been, what they’ve got, what drives them, what they’re looking for.



They should be able to tell their story in two minutes or less. Beyond that time limit, the interviewer can lose interest or fail to remember everything that was said. It is well to remind counselees that this is just an introduction, and as such is intended to pique enough interest for the interviewer to ask probing or more specific questions later. This self-introduction will be important in getting the potential employer interested in finding out more about the jobseeker.

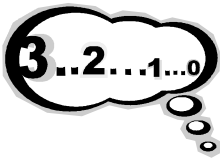
The following script is suggested for young jobseekers to prepare and plan for. With enough practice, the script will become such a part of them that they can recite it with spontaneity and ease.

My name is _____ and I come from (place). I graduated in (year) from (school) with a degree in (field). Since graduation I worked in (organization) as a (position) where I was responsible for (main area/s of responsibility). My skills include (skills). I work best in (preferred work conditions). I am looking for a job in (areas) because (reasons). I believe I can contribute to your organization because (reasons).

example

Making a summary statement

A summary statement is a short (about 50-60 words) description of oneself which includes:



- ☐ who you are
- ☐ years of experience (if any)
- ☐ your field
- ☐ three major skills
- ☐ three major traits

The aim of the summary statement is to provide the potential employer with a quick description of what a jobseeker can do and why it is worthwhile to get to know him/her better. It may be the basis for deciding to call the jobseeker for an interview. It may determine why the reader will continue reading a resume or throw it in the trash bin.

examples

A skilled computer technician with experience in the manufacturing industry. Excellent skills in hardware maintenance and repair. Hardworking, able to get along with people, with good communication skills.

An achiever with a track record of leadership in handling school organizations. Possesses excellent skills in problem solving, planning, and fund-raising. Resourceful, works well under pressure, and delivers timely results.



A hardworking individual with excellent cooking skills, specializing in Japanese dishes, gained from work experience as a cook in a restaurant chain. Gets along well with people, trustworthy, and reliable.

The resumé, the jobseeker's personal brochure

The resumé is a personal advertisement, a brochure, that attempts to do one thing:

marketing myself

In counseling young jobseekers, it is important to emphasize that the resumé is more than just a listing of where one worked or went for schooling. It is that one document that opens the door for the potential employer to want to get to know the jobseeker. In other words, the function of a resumé is to give the potential employer a peek into a jobseeker's background and to generate enough interest so that the company would want to call him/her to come for an interview.

After jobseekers have identified what they are good at, what their values and interests are, what their ambitions are, and where they best fit, they are now ready to prepare their personal brochure which showcases accomplishments in the past that can be duplicated in various scenarios in the future.

Here are some tips in doing the resumé.

- Use strong action words.
- Make the resumé attractive to the eye, with sufficient white space so that it is not crowded and difficult to read.
- Use an appropriate format, nothing fancy or elaborate.
- Have two other people look over the resumé and make comments to ensure accuracy and increase impact.
- Use font size 11 or 12, nothing smaller.
- Do not overdo the use of capitals, boldface, or underlines.
- Pay attention to grammar, typographical errors, etc. Mistakes in these areas show carelessness.

..... **résumé** **contents**

- Full Name
- Address (including zip code)
- Contact Number (landline, mobile)
- Email address
- Summary Statement
- Work (or School, if none) Experience
- Job Responsibilities (for each job)
- Accomplishments
- Education
- Personal Data
(nationality, civil status,
birthplace, birthdate)



The résumé aims to get an interview. You don't have to tell everything in a resume! You give the details in the interview.

sample résumé

(With work
experience)



Name

Address

Contact Numbers

(landline, mobile)

Email address

Summary Statement

Work Experience

- Name of company, years worked
 - one-line description of company
- Job Title/Position
- Brief description of job responsibilities
- Accomplishments

Education

Personal Data (nationality, civil status,
birthplace, birthdate)

sample resumé

(With no work
experience)



Name

Address

Contact Numbers

(landline, mobile)

Email address

Summary Statement

School Experience (include on-the-job
training, apprenticeship)

- Degree or level attained
- Name of school
- Inclusive dates of attendance
- Organizations, clubs
- Brief description of responsibilities
in the organization
- Awards, citations and honors
received
- Accomplishments

Personal Data (nationality, civil status,
birthplace, birthdate)

frequently asked questions

about the resumé

How long should a resumé be?

Two pages only. Screeners will usually not read beyond two pages. It is better to have a short resumé that is read than a long one that is trashed. Remember, the resumé is only a brochure. You give the details in the interview.

What should I include in my personal data?

In general, avoid facts that may be used to discriminate against you (such as religion), and those that do not necessarily help your application (such as interests, hobbies, height and weight). You must, of course, include them if the company requires you to do so.

Should I put my photo in my resumé?

It is best not to – unless the company requires it. How you look does not determine how you work. Unfortunately, screeners are sometimes influenced by photos and judge on the basis of looks so it is best not to provide that additional detail.

using references

References play an important role in any job search. However, not too many jobseekers know how to use references to their best advantage. This is because they often do not know how to help prepare their chosen references to play their part well.

The role of references is quite clear: it is to help support the jobseeker's application. References are supposed to be able to say something nice about the jobseeker! It does not make sense for a jobseeker to give a reference who will speak ill of him/her, who will be a foe rather an ally in convincing the potential employer to hire the jobseeker.

In order to do a good job, however, references must be prepared for their role. The following may help young jobseekers to use their references to the max:

- Ask permission from references **before** submitting their names.
- Because references are supposed to say something nice about the jobseeker, it is critical that
 - they know (remember) who you are
 - they know you are applying, for what and where
 - they know a lot about you (provide them your resumé)
 - they expect to get a call from someone they don't know.

It is best to communicate with chosen references, both to ask permission to use their names and to refresh their memory about the jobseeker. This must be done when the potential employer requests the list of references from the jobseeker.

It would be useful for jobseekers to prepare key points they want to be emphasized about them. This is useful in helping references to remember the jobseeker's abilities, achievements,

and work ethics. Providing references with the jobseeker's resumé is the best way of helping them to know what to say, what to highlight, and what things about the jobseeker would best support the application.

If the reference is a former boss, it may be useful to remind him/her about performance issues, such as consistent high ratings in performance reviews, ability to meet deadlines, reliability, trustworthiness. School or class performance would likewise be a major item for references like teachers, guidance counselors, advisers, principals, and school officials. If the reference is a relative, family member or friend, it is important that he/she should say something about the potential of the jobseeker as a worker or employee, not as a family relation. Personal traits must be used as basis for endorsing the jobseeker as an asset to a workplace or organization.

References must also be informed about what job the jobseeker is applying for, with what companies and where. They will thus be alerted to the fact that they can expect getting calls from people they don't know. This

information will lessen the chances that they will refuse such calls from strangers.

Young jobseekers should be advised not to include their list of references in their resumé. This information is not necessary at this early stage. Potential employers will request for references when they become really interested in the jobseeker. It is then time for the jobseeker to call his/her references for permission and useful information.



The Cover Letter

The resumé is usually accompanied by a cover letter. It is in the cover letter that the jobseeker states what he/she is looking for (job target). The cover letter should also clearly show what the application is for, especially if the resumé is being submitted in response to an advertisement or to personal referral.

The cover letter should contain:

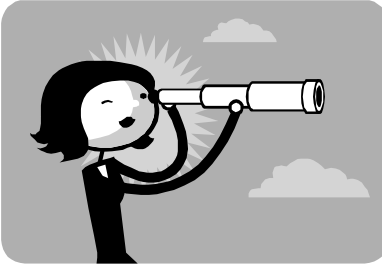
- Date
- Addressee: to whom you are sending your resumé (usually specified in the job ad or by the person who referred you)
- Reference: details of your source of information (example: if advertised – source; date; position advertised; reference number, if any)
- Job Target: a sentence explaining what job you are targeting
- Your availability for interview or start date
- Your contact details (landline, mobile, email address)
- Your signature



Part Three

Knowing where & how to look

The job search process begins with finding out where and how to look for job openings. Young jobseekers often do not know where to begin, and this lack of knowledge of the process often leads them to the wrong turns and the loss of precious time. They should thus be given guidance on how to begin their search for their new job.



There are generally two ways to look for a job: the advertised job market and the hidden job market. Each has a wealth of information to offer, with varying usefulness.

The advertised job market

This is the more commonly-used starting point for jobseekers, depending on the skills for information-seeking that they possess. Categorized under the advertised job market are:

- ④ classified ads (newspapers, journals, magazines, and other print media)
- ④ employment agencies and search firms
- ④ internet (job search, employment, entrepreneurship, franchising, and company websites, etc.)
- ④ job fairs
- ④ shop windows, public places, community billboards
- ④ television, radio

Aside from these, there are government agencies that have readily available information on jobs. The Public Employment Service Office (PESO) located strategically throughout the country (visit their website for listings) provides invaluable service to jobseekers. It has a track record in helping connect jobseekers with companies looking for people, and has been instrumental in placing many jobseekers in their jobs.

There are also many non-government agencies that are concerned with helping young jobseekers in their job search. Search engines such as google.com provide useful links to these organizations.

Following are helpful tips that counselors can offer when advising young jobseekers on where and how to look:

- Be alert and observant of any and all happenings and changes in their surroundings. Is there a new business being established in the street corner? Is there a job fair in the mall? Is there a “wanted” sign in the place where one is having lunch?
- Be curious and don’t be shy to ask around.
- Look up the latest news about jobs in general and your industry in particular.

The hidden job market

The hidden job market is a combination of what you know and who you know. This is called the jobseeker’s network. It is made up of friends and *barkada*, friends of friends, relatives, co-workers, neighbors, teachers, interest groups, church community, sports club. Jobseekers must be encouraged to come out with their own network list that can be tapped in their job search.



The hidden job market operates on the premise that there are companies that want to look for people through their own networks. They prefer this because those who will be referred

to them are already known to people they know, and this may significantly short cut the selection process.

So how do jobseekers get to find out about hidden jobs? The primary process is through networking.

The following may help jobseekers in tapping their most important resource, their network.

- Begin networking with those you know best – family, friends, co-workers.
- Develop your contact list (name, job/position, organization, address, contact number).
- Establish and nurture your contacts.
- Get to know people in your field.
- Allow them to know you – your skills, experiences, interests, etc. (remember your script?)
- Ask for additional contacts for your network.
- Give copies of your resume to your network.
- Keep in touch with your network regularly even after you find a job.
- Return the favor by passing helpful information to others.
- Thank your contact/s who helped you find a job.

It may be said that in the advertised job market, it is the jobseeker who is looking for the employer, while in the hidden job market, it is the employer who is looking for the jobseeker.

The advertised job market is very competitive. Everyday HR people are swamped with resumes in response to an advertisement their company has put out. This means that a jobseeker's resume must stand out in order to be noticed. Information in this market is easily accessible. However, it must also be noted that only a fraction of jobs are actually advertised.

It is said that "80% of all positions are filled without employer advertising." This makes the hidden job market a preferred place to start looking. Imagine answering an ad where the jobseeker competes with who knows how many applicants. In another scenario, the same jobseeker, acting on the tip of a friend about a job



opening in the company, is introduced directly to the hiring manager by the friend, complete with a good word or two about him/her. It is obvious which process takes longer and is generally more stressful.

Networking has been found to have a 70-80% efficiency rate. What this means, then, is that jobseekers must spend more of their time networking than, say, looking at the classified ads. They must also use all the possible means: classified ads, internet, shop windows – the works!

the importance of research

Looking for a job is not the same as looking for just any job. That's why it is important to help jobseekers understand the difference so that they will strive to find out all they can about the company and the job it is trying to fill.

Jobseekers must be advised to keep their preferred work conditions always in mind because it is these which will help determine whether they will fit in the new environment or not.

This is the first reason why jobseekers should research. They need to know whether the company will match what they're looking for. They also need indicators that they will fit the role that they are applying for.

Jobseekers also need to research because it lets the company know that they are interested enough to understand what the company is, its culture, its requirements, norms, and values.



What to research

Information is an important component of job search and jobseekers must spend time seeking what they need to know. They need to research on the following:

The job market: What does the employment picture look like? How much in demand are their skills and experience?

Field and industry: What are the current employment trends in their field? What kinds of skills are companies looking for?

The company: Does it match what they are looking for? What is the company culture like? Its workforce? Its organizational climate?

The job: What is the position? What does it require? Will the jobseeker fit? Will the job fit him/her?

The jobseeker: Given what the jobseeker has researched, what other skills does he/she have to acquire to be competitive?

Where to research

There are many places to look. Computerization has put information virtually at our fingertips. It may be said that lack of know-how in this area is a big disadvantage for those who are unable to tap into this resource.

Remembering that networking remains the most effective job search tool, jobseekers should not feel totally paralyzed if they do not have either the skills or the access to computers. However, young jobseekers must work toward acquiring skills in this area because the future will be increasingly difficult if they remain ignorant of technology. Their competitive edge will be continually challenged in a world that is increasingly dependent on the computer for doing business.

Where to research? Following are some places to go to:



- * Government websites
- * Company websites – management, financials, structure, products, company events (newsletter), community involvements
- * Newspaper and magazine write-ups, journal articles, other print media
- * Television, radio

- * Job search engines – what job openings are companies advertising for?
- * Personal networks

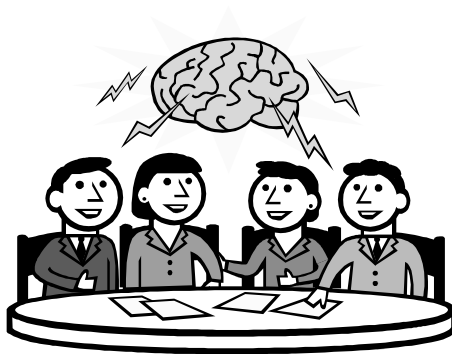
Above all, jobseekers must be encouraged to be observant and alert to anything in the environment that is even tangentially related to their job search. Job leads can come in the most unexpected places, in odd forms and shapes, and from the most unlikely encounters.

Jobseekers must be advised about the existence of the Public Employment Service Office (PESO) which is a vital part of the services available to jobseekers, young and old alike.

Public Employment Service Office



a non-fee charging multi-employment service facility of the Bureau of Local Employment, Department of Labor and Employment



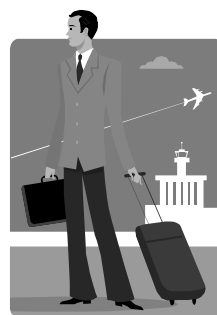
Overseas Employment

One of the best pieces of advice that counselors can give to young jobseekers about overseas employment is that they should know how to use the resources and services available to them. There are enough stories of tragic experiences with illegal recruitment, non-payment of contracted compensation, violations of terms of employment, abuse, and all kinds of fraud related to overseas employment. A lot of these unfortunate situations can be avoided if young jobseekers are advised properly on the legitimacy of entities and persons they choose to deal with in their search for jobs abroad.

The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA) is an important source of help. Its website is an excellent one-stop shop for anyone seeking information. It includes vital information such as a listing of duly-registered recruitment agencies, visa requirements of the country being targeted, and tips on how to use the internet for searching for jobs abroad. It also contains quick statistics on overseas employment and easy-to-read articles on understanding the culture of the target country and other subjects of interest to jobseekers of overseas jobs.

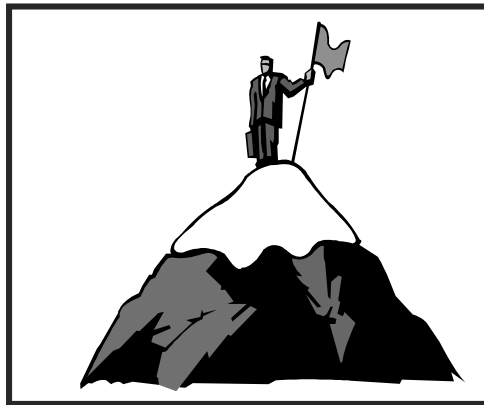
Looking for jobs abroad?

**Your one-stop site for all the
information you need:**



<http://www.poea.gov.ph/>

Counselors must continually challenge young jobseekers to use the Net for exploring job opportunities. This does not only ensure that they gain proficiency in the use of computers (adding this to their basket of competencies), but that they are empowered to take full responsibility for their job search. It is not uncommon for young jobseekers to believe that they can work overseas for the simple reason that a relative or friend is working abroad. Even as they dream of a similar scenario for themselves, they can, at the same time, be so totally dependent on that relative or friend that they transfer all responsibility to that person. Young jobseekers must know that looking for a job is primarily their concern and that others are there to support and cheer them on, but that no one can take over their job search.



interviewing

It has been said that the objective of a resume is to get an interview. This is where the company representative gets to meet the applicant and tries to find out his/her suitability for the position being filled.

Consider these scenarios.

Interviewer: "So you are applying for Editorial Assistant in our Lifestyle section. What do you think of our page layout?"

Interviewee: "I am sorry, sir, but I have not seen your section yet."



Interviewer: "What do you think of our brands as compared with our competitors' products?"

Interviewee: "What are your products, sir?"

Do you think these interviewees will get the job? No way! Interviewees will hardly be impressed by applicants who do not do their homework.

Interviews often scare young jobseekers out of their wits. They may have struggled through creating their resumes and sending them out, but the notice of an interview sends panic tingling through their nerves. This panic is undoubtedly aggravated if the jobseeker has not done appropriate research on the company where he/she is applying.

While this emotional state is normal, it is easy to overcome the anxiety once young jobseekers understand what interviews are all about.

Consider the following article which appeared in mytrabaho.com for its October 9, 2006 "My Trabaho Advice" section:

What are the common questions that interviewers ask?

by Loree Cruz-Mante

Downloaded from mytrabaho.com, MyTrabaho Advice, October 2006

“WHAT are the common questions that interviewers ask? And what would be the answers for them? For example, how should I answer the following questions: 1) How are you going to handle stress or pressure? 2) Why should we hire you? 3) Why do you want to work in this company? 4) What can you contribute in this company? 5) What are your weaknesses? Please help me. – Chel

The questions asked by an interviewer will all depend on the type of interview being conducted. There are generally two types of interviews: the screening interview and the hiring interview. The objective of the screening interview is to come up with a short list of candidates worth pursuing. The hiring interview, on the other hand, assumes that the applicant has already made the mark and is now seriously being considered for a job offer. It may be a final check before the job offer or the meeting during which the offer is made.

The questions asked during both interview types are generally meant to help the interviewer answer three questions:

- 1) Can the applicant do the job?
What skills does he/she have
to perform the required
tasks?*
- 2) Is the applicant interested
and motivated to do the job?
Will he/she do it well?*
- 3) Does the applicant fit in the
organization? Will he/she fit
the organization's culture
and adhere to its work norms
and values?*



It is not enough that an applicant has the skills to perform the job (can do), he/she must also have the motivation to do it (will do). The most important thing is that there is a fit between the applicant and

the organization. This increases the likelihood that the applicant can and will do the job if hired because the work environment motivates him/her to perform at peak levels.

Here are some tips to help you:

Anticipate the questions. “Generic” questions such as “Can you tell me about yourself?” or “Why should we hire you?” can be found in any job search-related website. But aside from these, you should draw up your own list of possible questions. These questions may be related to who you are and what you can do for your potential employer. Remember that you are selling your suitability for the job, and that process begins with knowing your product: YOU! Questions may also be about the company, its products, its mission, the job opening as you understand it.

Research and gather as much information as you can. One interviewer asked: “What do you know about our products?” The interviewee returned a blank look. How can you impress the interviewer as competent and interested if you have not even done your homework? Imagine if you were asked about your preference for toothpaste and you named a competitive brand!

Prepare answers to anticipated questions. Try to understand why an interviewer asks a particular question. Questions like “How do you deal with stress?” “What do you do for leisure?” or “What do you think of office politics?” all have different objectives. Work out answers to those before you go for your interview.



Practice and walk through the interview both in your mind and in front of the mirror and/or recorder. Dig up memories of previous interviews and see what you did well and what you can do better. Create the scenario in your mind and vividly see yourself answering questions confidently. Where you imagine yourself fumbling, stop and work on that portion.

In the end, answering questions well during an interview is the product of preparation (research, anticipation, analyzing the whys and objectives of questions, practice) AND being yourself. There is no way to present yourself as A-okay if you are not. This means that you

should be in a perpetual and lifelong learning mode, adding to your competencies and honing your skills for your dream job, so that when it comes along, you will be equal to the challenge.

The following may also be given to young jobseekers as additional tips:

Before the interview:

- Be ready to recite your scripts on your past and your self-introduction.
- Anticipate questions and prepare answers.
- Make sure you have researched about the company and know all you can possibly know at this time.
- Get enough sleep and rest so you will be fresh and alert for your interview.



During the interview:

- Focus on your accomplishments and how you can potentially contribute to providing solutions for the company.
- Understand what the job opening is about and how you can fill it, given your skills, values, and traits.
- Ask questions about the recruitment process.
- Ask questions about the company, the job, the culture. (Remember, you have to fit.)
- Don't complain about people and things. Don't speak ill of your former employer.
- Defer discussions about money.
- See things from the company's interest, not yours.
- Be confident. You have something worthwhile to offer. Speak in a properly modulated voice.
- Do not argue with the interviewer.
- Dress appropriately.
- Avoid too many facial and body movements that can be distracting, including nail biting, chewing gum, looking at watch, drumming fingers.

- Be courteous and polite at all times.
- Sit up straight! It shows interest.
- Speak up! It shows confidence.
- Maintain eye contact. It shows you're sincere.
- Listen. Show genuine concern.
- Relax. You can answer better if you are calm.

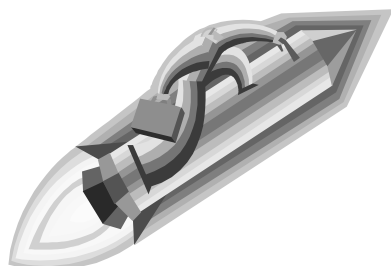
After the interview:

- Assess what you did well.
- List what things you can do better in future interviews.
- Note what questions were asked.
- Rewrite your scripts as necessary.
- Plan to do whatever agreements were made with the interviewer (such as call after a week, etc.).
- Write a thank you letter. It will make them remember you.
- List lessons you learned from the experience.

dressing up for your interview



- What you wear depends on what position you are seeking. You have to dress the part!
- Research, find out what you can about the company culture and dress code. Then suit your fashion accordingly.
- Smart casual is usually the safest fashion. Avoid fashion extremes – too formal/too informal or too hip/ too conservative.
- Remember: you are presenting yourself for a job, not a date, a picnic, a gimmick, or a prom.



Tips that NEVER fail

- **Come early.** You should have time to catch your breath, comb your hair, go to the CR. Make sure you have enough time to establish where you are physically, mentally and emotionally, to sit still, to be quiet, and to focus on the interview ahead.
- **Come prepared** — with your researched information, your scripts, your answers, your questions.
- **Relax.** You will fumble more if you are so tense that you forget your name and everything in your resumé!
- **Focus. Concentrate. Be alert.** The waiting time before your interview is not the time to cram about what to say or to worry if your shirt is crumpled. It is rather the time to focus on the present moment.

Following are some of the most commonly asked questions:



- ≈ Tell me about yourself.
- ≈ Why are you looking for a job?
- ≈ Why do you want to join this company?
- ≈ What would you say are your strengths and weaknesses?
- ≈ How do you see yourself five years from now?
- ≈ What do you consider your achievements?
- ≈ What do you know about our company?
- ≈ How do you deal with problems?

In addition to anticipating questions and preparing appropriate responses to them before the interview, jobseekers can also be advised to review their accomplishments so that they can talk confidently about them. It would be well to remember that interviews are also aimed at checking the truth and accuracy of what a resume contains so it must be expected that interviewers will delve into the resume items as starting points for discussion.

Many jobseekers acquire skills in being interviewed during the course of their job search. It is a good thing that they try to learn as much as they can about themselves during all the interviews they go through. As they get better and better, they also increase the chances that when the real good opening comes, they would be better prepared to handle interview stresses which, by this time, may not even be considered stressors at all.

What are employers looking for, anyway?

Employers generally look for three things:

1. Can you do the job? What skills, competencies, abilities, and talents do you possess to do what the job requires?
2. Will you do the job? Do you have the interest, motivation, and right work values to perform what is required?
3. Will you fit in the company and its culture? Will you be able to get along well with others? Is there a match?

It is probably not obvious, but did you notice that what potential employers are looking for is precisely what jobseekers *should* be looking for? In many cases, however, jobseekers do not. They often look only at their skills but not their values, or their preferred work conditions but not their interests. Young jobseekers must be advised to look for the same things that employers are looking for. In this way, the match between company and jobseeker would be better assured, resulting in a satisfying work relationship that can last many years.



Perhaps the most important skill that employers look for is communication. The young jobseeker who can communicate well has a distinct advantage over those who have poor facility with language.

Following up an application

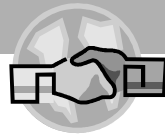
An extremely anxious time for young jobseekers is the waiting time after an interview. Will they get another call? When? How do they know if they should give up hope about getting the job for which they were interviewed? Should they follow-up their application? Or will their follow-up be viewed as being pushy, impatient or distrusting?

These are difficult questions to answer and they can cause a lot of anxiety. However, they need not cause sleepless nights because they can be avoided. How?

First of all, it's all right to follow up an application. This, however, depends on one condition:

It's okay to follow-up!

*... but only if you
agreed on certain things
when you closed the
interview.*



In other words, young jobseekers can claim the right to follow-up if they have made specific agreements about the next steps in the recruitment process. Young jobseekers must be assured that they have the right to know what happens next. To ensure this, it is important that they end the interview with a clear picture of the next few days or weeks. Agreements must also be made between the interviewer and the jobseeker about how follow-up should be done on the application after the interview.

Young jobseekers must be advised not to leave the interview without asking the following:

- Is it okay to follow-up on my application?
- When can I call (email, text) you to follow-up?
- When can I expect to get a call (email, text) from you?
- When do you have to make a decision?
- What are the next steps in your recruitment process?

Asking these questions may, in fact, be a plus point for jobseekers since they indicate to the interviewer that they are interested in how the process progresses for them. It also signals to the interviewer how they expect to be treated: professionally.

Above all, asking these questions and making agreements convert the follow-up into a simple fulfillment of an agreed-upon process rather than an aggressive or impatient move to push for information.

It is a very good practice to send a thank you letter right after the interview, no more than a day after. Do jobseekers really do this? Hardly anyone does it, which is why counselors should advise young jobseekers to do it! It helps the



interviewer to remember the particular jobseeker as the one who did such a memorable thing of writing a thank you letter.

It is also in the thank you letter that the jobseeker can reiterate the agreements made:

“As we agreed, I will call you after a week.”

“I will email you on the 15th since you said you prefer to receive an email rather than a text.”

“You said that you will make a decision by the end of the month. I will eagerly await your decision on that date, after which you said I can call your cellphone.”

“I will not follow-up my application until the end of the month. But as we agreed, I can call you up by the first week of the following month if I do not hear from you.”



Part Four

Making the Deal

Sooner or later, young jobseekers will be offered a job. And because they worked long and hard to get it, the first impulse is to accept the offer.

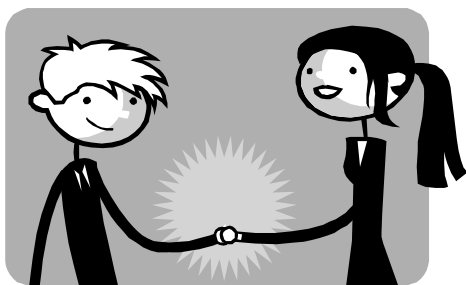
The problem with accepting a job offer on the spot is that there is no time to think through the decision or examine the offer thoroughly. Young jobseekers should therefore be cautioned against this tendency. They need to be able to study the written offer carefully, especially the fine print or those items that are not clearly visible and obvious.

One piece of good advice is to let the jobseekers ask for at least 24 hours to consider the written offer. Many jobseekers are hesitant to accept this idea because they fear that if they do, the potential employer may replace them with someone else.

This hesitation is a bit naïve. Jobseekers must be made to see that the recruitment and selection process that the company goes through in seeking an appropriate candidate entails costs to it, in terms of real cash and personnel time. If, at the end of the line, a candidate rejects their offer, the company would be back to square one. This might have adverse consequences to its timelines or the need to get going on a specific project.

Put simply, the company obviously considers the jobseeker appropriate for its needs; otherwise, it would not make an offer. It would be quite costly to redirect its efforts to another candidate simply because it cannot wait another day. The

jobseeker has obviously proven that his/her services would be valuable to the company, and that fact cannot be so easily dismissed within 24 hours.



Asking for time also tells the company that the jobseeker is serious about understanding the contract before signing, an indication that he/she is not careless about entering something that is not fully understood. It also sets some kind of standard for the future relationship because it indicates that the jobseeker is not one to be flippant with or to dismiss as a pushover. In fact, asking for at least 24 hours may be considered a plus point for the jobseeker because it proves that he/she considers the job offer to be important and one that must be carefully thought out. It also indicates that the jobseeker is not careless about making a commitment.

The following tips may be useful to advice young jobseekers:

- An offer is not an offer unless it is written.
- An offer is not a job until you sign the contract.
- If you ask for more (compensation, benefits, etc.), two things can happen: either you get it or you don't. But if you don't ask, you won't get! Just be sure you don't complain that you're not given when you haven't asked!
- Negotiate BEFORE you sign the contract, not after



you've accepted the job. You should negotiate when you are in a vantage position to do so, not when you are powerless.

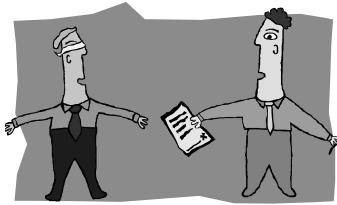
- Ask for at least 24 hours to consider the offer. Those who say "yes" on the spot may find out later that there are things in the contract that they do not agree with. It would then be too late to back out.
- Read the written offer and contract BEFORE you sign!
- Clarify anything you don't understand.
- Discuss the offer with family and friends before you accept.

At the heart of all the care and meticulousness in making the deal is the desire to make sure that the company and the job

fit the jobseeker. It would be wise to remember that looking for a job does not just mean any job, but a job that fits.

It is tempting for new entrants to the workforce to consider the first job as an experiment that they can easily get away from should they find it dissatisfying. The truth is that it is not that easy to get out of a job, and even more difficult to find a new one. An even sadder thing would be to stay on in a job simply because it is difficult to get out, knowing fully well that it is not satisfying and meaningful.

When is the best time to negotiate? Certainly not the day after one is hired. As in bargaining in the *tiangge*, the best time is **before** you pay for the goods. It would be quite senseless to insist on a discount after one has transferred the money from his/her hand to the seller's.



The same is true for negotiating. If jobseekers feel, for example, that the pay is too low for what they may have researched to be fair value in the market for a particular position, then they should bring that up in the negotiation stage. If they think it would be to the company's advantage that they be allowed to work from home one day a week in order to concentrate better, then this must be negotiated before the contract signing. If one absolutely has to leave early on a particular day in the week to catch up with masteral classes, then this must be brought up at this stage.

Once a jobseeker signs the contract, it would be difficult to change its terms to which he/she has agreed as indicated by the signature.

The following story may help stress the need to time any attempt at negotiation.

A call center agent who has been working for four years in three call centers has, theoretically, an edge over someone applying in a call center for the first time.

But Anna is never able to use her four years worth of experience to negotiate for a better package. She is also given the same schedule as the newbies even though there are day schedules which may be given to those who have call center experience. (Day schedules are often considered preferable to graveyard shifts.)

The first day she reported as new employee of her third call center, she talked with the HR Manager to complain about her package. She wanted her salary renegotiated. She learned that another agent who was hired together with her had only one year experience but was signed up for several thousand pesos more.

Question: What can you learn about negotiation from this story?

To sum up, making the deal is all about reviewing the jobseeker's personal profile of skills, talents, abilities and competencies; interests, motivations, values; goals, dreams and ambitions and preferred work conditions that determine best fit.

If the jobseeker can see that this is the environment where he/she can contribute meaningfully and where he/she can align personal with organizational needs, then it's a deal!



a peek into entrepreneurship



There seems to be a common misconception that entrepreneurship is a second choice jobseekers get into because they can no longer find a job. This kind of thinking relegates entrepreneurship to a second-rate choice.

On the other hand, there is also the notion that if one fails at entrepreneurship, then he/she can consider employment as an alternative path. Again, this thinking presupposes that one is preferred to the other.

There are actually two options that young jobseekers can choose from when planning their careers: one, working for others or employment, and two, working for oneself or entrepreneurship. This puts both employment and entrepreneurship as equally-situated choices, not one superior to the other or chosen on the singular reason that the other option failed.

The better way to view these two career options is that they are available for jobseekers who must choose on the basis of who they are and what they are after. The choice must be based on what jobseekers feel they are willing to do, given their preferred work conditions and motivations.

There is no one profile that determines successful entrepreneurs or employers. The list of characteristics for each option is almost interchangeable with the other. What this means is that jobseekers must assess themselves to determine which path they feel more suitable for them to take. This means taking stock of their abilities, interests, values, goals and ambitions, and preferred work conditions.

Jobseekers must be encouraged to list down:

- what they see as advantages and disadvantages of each career option
- what each career option requires in terms of personal characteristics and preferences

- what characteristics and personal traits they possess to make them fit for each career option.

These self-descriptions may provide some insights that can help push for the entrepreneurial choice.

Are you

- a risk-taker
- committed to an idea
- willing to work hard
- passionate about pursuing a business idea
- not afraid to lose (money, time, face)
- can easily bounce back when things fail
- physically and emotionally able to withstand the pressures
- resourceful and innovative
- positive in outlook
- can communicate and relate well with all kinds of people
- can envision the future
- knows how to sell and market (products and services)
- can handle money well

One determinant is risk.

- The entrepreneur takes all the risk so that when it pays off, he/she makes all the gain.
- The employee may work as hard, but his/her earning capacity is limited by what the organization is willing to pay for his/her efforts.

Entrepreneurship is not for everyone. In deciding whether to be an employee or an entrepreneur, consider these:

- ▼ Assess yourself. Do you think you are enough of a risk taker to venture on your own? Or do you feel more secure receiving a paycheck?
- ▼ Study the business you want to go into. From product or service, to market, to capitalization, to sustainability. Understand breakeven, cash flow, inventory. In and out. Upside down. Know it like the back of your hand.
- ▼ Ask advice and ask for help. Interview business people. Learn from their lessons.
- ▼ Prepare for both success and failure. Anticipate the odds. Assess how much you can afford to lose. Plan for how to react if your business booms beyond your capacity.

In the end, the same question remains: Do your skills, values and preferred work conditions fit entrepreneurship? Is there a match?

Dealing with feelings

The uncertainty attending job search often takes the young person on a roller coaster ride. The highs and lows of emotions can be quite difficult to cope with, especially for young people who may be experiencing tremendous pressure at this time in their lives.

Counselors should be particularly cognizant of this see-saw of feelings. They must provide the anchor and emotional stronghold which the young can lean on.

Different stressors may appear intermittently or linger for

some time. These are usually due to the fatigue attending real physical movement from place to place, such as applying in different places, going to job fairs, talking with networks, traveling. Emotional and psychological stressors have to do with rejection, anxiety, fear of the unknown, and low self-esteem, among others, which



result from the uncertainty of the outcomes and consequences of the job search process. Mental and intellectual strain is also common, owing to tests and interviews that must be taken. Spiritual strength is also sometimes challenged and stretched to its limits, as doubts, fears, and rejections erode the sense of direction and purpose, even faith in a greater, controlling Power.

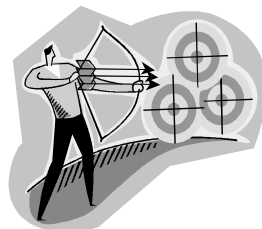
When the young jobseeker consults a counselor, this means that he/she recognizes the need for a more mature outlook to be provided, some direction perhaps or, at the very least,

someone who will listen and empathize. It is here where counselors can provide lasting help.

Following are suggested counseling points:

- Stay focused.

Young jobseekers must be enthused to keep their sights on goals, dreams, and ambitions even in the face of the current reality. They must be encouraged to look beyond the hurdles and obstacles, and visualize themselves overcoming them. By focusing their sights on what they envision their future to be, they will be better able to direct their efforts towards the kind of future they seek. These dreams give their jobseeking efforts an anchor and a hope.



- Keep yourself motivated.

Young jobseekers must be reminded always to keep themselves alive and alert. They must listen to what their body is saying and take a rest if fatigue is the problem. They must learn to take minute vacations to recharge and rejuvenate.

They need to assess what are their personal revitalizers and how these can be exploited during this time. Again, keeping an eye on the future can be one effective motivator.

Pauses and silences are great stress relievers and revitalizers. Jobseekers can emerge from these momentary breaks with a new vitality to engage the jobseeking process once more.

- Be aware of expectations.

Expectations are often the source of conflict between jobseekers and those around them, mostly parents and

household members. Parents can be supportive but they can also add to the pressure by having unrealistic expectations of their children, whether expressed or not. Many household members are often insensitive to what young jobseekers are going through and may say or behave in a way that hurts the jobseeker.

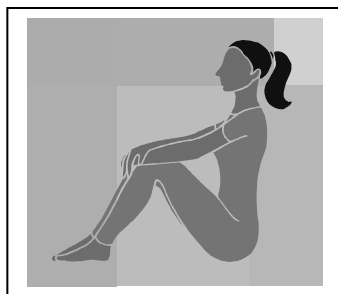
Young jobseekers must be made aware that these expectations exist. It is best that they identify what these expectations are, who the sources are, and the reasons for them. They may also be advised to discuss their job search process with concerned family members. In this way, the family will better understand what their young jobseeker is going through and thus be better able to support his/her endeavors.

Young jobseekers should not allow themselves to be pressured to meet expectations of family and friends.

- Relax.

There will always be moments of panic during job search. These are both natural and expected. When they do occur, the best advice is still to take a breather, relax, breathe deeply, and “chill,” as the young would say.

It helps to take stock of what is happening, to assess and reposition, and then to move on with a more realistic picture of the best and the worst that can happen. Allowing the jobseeker to go circling in a spiral down to frustration and even depression can have unhealthy consequences both for the person and the job search. Jobseekers need to be assured that this is all part of life and part of having to “...eat by the sweat of thy brow.”



Helper's High

Helping others results in a certain kind of high similar to that experienced by joggers. In jogging, the body releases endorphins which are chemical compounds known to produce a sense of well-being and pain relief. Endorphins give joggers a reinvigorated feeling that they can go on running forever. It is actually difficult for them to stop. They feel that they can run or jog to the ends of the world and not grow weary. The high that they feel, brought about by endorphins, is a reward in itself.

In counseling, helpers also experience this. It is called helper's high. As in jogging, the act of helping others results in giving counselors a kind of high that will make them seek it out and desire more of it.

Helping young people through their transition from new graduate, out-of-school youth, school leaver, or unemployed can give counselors a helper's

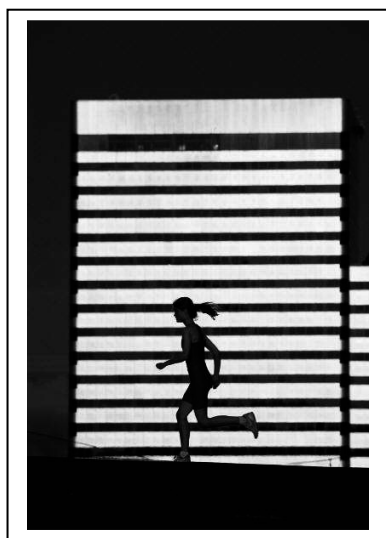


high. It is in participating in their young lives at this stage in their life journey that is the rare privilege of the counselor, whether he/she is a trained professional, a parent, a sibling, or a relative, a friend, a teacher, a schoolmate, occasionally even a stranger. Giving of oneself to another in this form and being able to participate in an otherwise personal and esoteric experience is enough cause for helper's high.

It is important that counselors recognize this vital energizer that can keep them patiently journeying along with the jobseeker. Counseling is not prescriptive or insistent. Rather, it is life-giving and uplifting. It is precisely in the idea of giving

jobseekers the freedom to decide on their own, in their time, that helper's high resides. Help is unconditionally given, and even help that is thwarted is unconditionally accepted. If counseling were selfish, then it would not produce helper's high because the advice would be given conditionally. There would be strings attached, and mostly this would be in the form of exacting compliance. Jobseeker-counselees would be acceptable only if they took the counselor's advice and acted on it. If they did not do as advised, the counselor would be dissatisfied. This does not make helper's high possible.

As long as counselors experience helper's high, they would go on doing what they are doing. Despite the difficulties, they will feel as though they could go on running forever. And indeed they can.



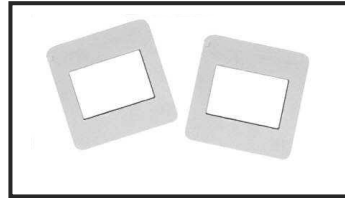
inspiring
articles



The Business of Giving Hope

by James and Loree Mante

On a red brick wall in our terrace, two old posters mounted on wooden frames hang side by side. They show similar pictures of small streams moving upward to join larger bodies of water, possibly seas or oceans. The caption on one poster reads: "What appears to be the end may really be a new beginning." On the other poster, the caption reads: "Faith is knowing there is an ocean because you have seen a brook."



Counseling the retrenched

One day, in this same terrace, we were grappling with the meaning of our careers, our life mission, our calling. Among other things, we are both involved in counseling those who have been retrenched. What is it really all about? How do we help people to deal with the pain of losing a job, oftentimes prematurely? How do we help them prepare to engage the future with confidence? What does it really mean for us to listen to their fears and dreams (or what's left of them)? What does it mean to be a career counselor?

Ageless message

We tossed ideas back and forth. Then James caught sight of the posters. "That's it! That's what it's all about!" He then wondered aloud where the posters may have come from. Loree explained that the posters were hers. She had bought them as a young girl in freshman college. Who knows how many times the posters helped her face the rigors of school, of starting a career, of charting a life course? The posters have also survived four residence moves, a lifetime commitment to take care of parents to the end, raising a family, multiple careers, diverse

interests and sundry engagements. Today the posters still stand there, ageless, timeless.

Giving hope

James saw in those posters something that explained the meaning of our life career. As career counselors, we are in the business of giving hope. Not hope that is based on wishful thinking or plain positive attitude or simple rah-rah-rah. It is hope that allows people to trust that there is a beginning in every ending, to see the truth that the brook will always link up with the ocean.

It is hope that is built on faith and trust, and the willingness and ability to “see beyond.” Things are never what they seem. Job loss is only a temporary ending, a mere chapter. The financial and emotional setbacks of being let go are mere points in time. If one is able to see beyond the present, then there will always be hope.



Seeing beyond

Fr. Eli Santos, SDB, spoke of seeing beyond in his homily at a recent office blessing. He said that one who sees beyond can appreciate the true nature of things underneath the façade. Seeing beyond allows a person to understand another’s behavior at a level deeper than the obvious. It allows a person to interpret meanings hiding behind appearances.

One who sees beyond has a hopefulness that may seem unfounded to others, but it is one that is solidly grounded on what lies underneath the surface. To unearth the beauty behind the ugliness or the hope behind the desperation, one needs to see beyond.

Successful counseling

And so when we counsel those who have lost their jobs, we succeed only when we are able to make them see beyond their

circumstances. We succeed when they begin to see beyond their limitations and see what good they can offer. We succeed when they see the need to improve themselves and expand their competencies. We succeed when they affirm that there is a future waiting to unfold for them. We succeed when they see the present as an opportunity to rearrange their priorities and seek those that truly bring them happiness.

Choosing to see beyond

Seeing beyond is a choice. Hopefulness is a choice. And when we as career counselors choose to counsel others, we also make a choice to see beyond our counselees. Even as we cry and grieve with them, laugh and celebrate with them, we also make a choice to appreciate their innate capacity to find hope in the midst of their pains. We catch them in their fragile brokenness and yet challenge them to access the tough inner resources they have within.

There is incomparable joy in seeing beyond. There is immeasurable satisfaction in helping others to see beyond. That is why we have chosen to do what we do.



Winning paradigms for new graduates about to work

by Loree Cruz-Mante

Graduation is a marker event, a rite of passage, a crossover ritual. For some it marks the end of allowances and curfews, of the certainty of having been provided for by able parents. For others, it marks the end of working shifts to afford tuition, of putting life on hold while waiting for delayed funds from the province, of worrying whether one will continue to have the wherewithals to enroll one semester more.

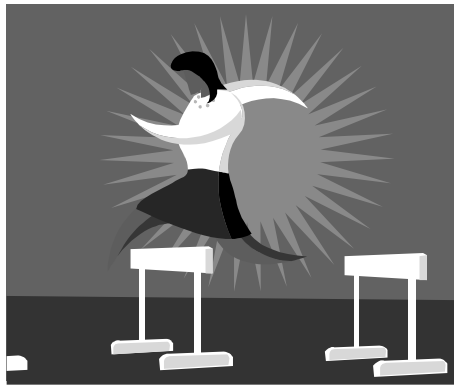
For all graduates, graduation is a transition to adulthood where the world of work looms ever so large and forbidding, waiting to be conquered and subdued.

Ambiguities

There is a dizzying excitement getting to wear one of those black togas in the heat of mid-afternoon. But there is also an equally frenzied anxiety about what to do next. As in any closing chapter of life, graduation is a time for both nostalgia and fear.

Many graduates take a roller coaster ride that seems forever, at least until they land a first job or start a business. One moment the world is friendly and there for the taking; the next moment it is daunting and formidable.

Be assured, dear graduate, that you are not losing your mind! These ambiguities are part of any transition. All graduates before you have felt the same discomfort. These disconcerting thoughts merely affirm that you have a shared heritage.



Statistics



It is useful to know the country's unemployment rate, but there is not much use meditating on it. People find jobs every single day despite the grim statistics! It is all right to be aware that the job market is depressed, but to conclude that you will therefore not find a job—or worse, not even try looking—is going quite too far. Such logic does not serve any good purpose except to rob you of the passion to take life at face value, even when it seems difficult to do so. Will this information prevent you from looking for a job anyway? Is it ever an option to stay put and not even try?

The process, not just the end

I have learned, through years of counseling people through their careers and transitions, that those who survive job loss with mind and soul intact are usually immune to downturns. Not that they necessarily find jobs quickly, but that they know how to see each day as part of a larger mosaic which, at the present time, they are not yet privileged to see. It is the excitement of looking forward to the day when they can see the whole picture that keeps them going through the process of piecing the parts together.

“Do not ask what's the story, you will miss the mystery,” goes one song. Too many graduates miss out on the vital lessons to be learned during career search because they are fixated on the ending. The process, long-drawn, tedious, nerve-racking as it may be, is still equally exciting, fun, and life-changing. Don't forget that in some distant future, you will look back to this stage in your life and find pleasure in recalling the disaster of your first application form, the near-heart attack of a first interview, the gruesome sight of long lines of applicants. And oh, what tears were shed because you may have flunked a test!

Pressures from several sides

New graduates are usually bombarded by pressures often coming from the very people who are expected to uphold them during these times of testing.

Parental pressure is real for many graduates. This may come in blatant forms (“When will you find a job?” or “What, no job yet?”) to more subtle but equally hurtful forms (“We could use some help with the groceries.” or “I thought we [your parents] have graduated, but...”



Peer pressure can also be devastating, especially when less brilliant ones overtake those voted most likely to succeed and land a job faster than everyone else. The temptation to ask “What’s wrong with me?” seems like an attractive self-downer.

Above all, there is self-imposed pressure. Allowing yourself to be sucked further and further down in a spiral of negative imaginings is sure to ruin whatever resolve you have left. Whose shadow are you running away from, anyway?

No matter how strong the pressures are, never allow yourself to grab anything just because you have to land a job quickly. You may find out soon enough that you will quit it almost as soon as you start. Sure, you want a job, but you also don’t want to stay for just a day. You’re looking for one where you will fit and which fits you. As in the Cinderella story, you simply can’t force yourself into a mold that isn’t for you.

Keeping sane



When you feel pressures mounting, stop awhile! Be still. Gain composure by focusing on your gains, not your losses. *You’ve been called for an interview. There is indeed an opening in your target company.*

The HR person seemed impressed with you. You're satisfied with the resume you've just finished.

Try to see this as a moment in time and not much more. This is not forever. This, too, shall pass. You have come this far!

Remember when you thought you would never make it to graduation day? But you did! There's no reason to doubt you can make it again through this one. Tomorrow is another day.

Don't lose touch

At whatever stage during your job search, never lose touch with yourself. There are many reasons why things don't seem to be working out. Many graduates blame external circumstances for their job-hunting woes. *The interviewer had a bias for graduates of exclusive schools. My parents ridiculed me again. My mediocre classmate who got hired knew someone big in the company. The jeepney ride was bumpy.*

Take a long hard look at yourself. Why would a potential employer want to hire you anyway? Have you honed your skills to be able to contribute meaningfully? Have you brushed up on your language skills or upgraded your computer know-how? Are you continuing to develop yourself? Are you marketing yourself as that one person who can contribute to the company rather than one who simply needs a job?

On the other hand, what do you really want to do? That may seem like a hard question to ask of one who has just left school to join the workforce. But you have to try and list what it is that actually excites you before you can excite others about you. No interviewer will be impressed if you don't know what you enjoy doing, what you are good at, what you value, what you dream of and aspire for.



Remember that the job market is competitive. Simply put, you must have skills and traits that will make people choose you over another candidate. You will not be judged as a stand-alone but as a participant against a backdrop of countless others. You must therefore shine and glitter.

More importantly, you must find a fit between you and the organization, its corporate values, its culture, its very nature. Remember that when you join a company, you become one of “them.” Will you be proud of this new identity?

See the fun in it all

Life after graduation can be a lot of fun to explore, that is, if you choose to have it that way. It may be a bumpy ride ahead, but a grouchy attitude, temper tantrums, and a generally defeated outlook will only add to the load.

Savor your joyride! You will only look for a first career once.



First published in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, People at Work section, March 20, 2005, p. 14

How to Survive Your Work Stressors

by Loree Cruz-Mante

Anyone who complains about stress in the workplace must one day accept the futility of such a preoccupation. Stress at work is as real as any other item in one's job description. When one signs a work contract, one also gives his/her consent to the fine print of S-T-R-E-S-S imbedded as a hyperlink in every other line. Stress is simply part of the working life – indeed, of life itself.

Does this mean, then, that we should all stop complaining and grudgingly accept the seemingly unacceptable? I definitely say “No!” There are countless individuals who seem to breeze through the stresses of everyday and consider it such a privilege to be at work! Let me share what some happy people at work have discovered.

Stress is natural

Stress is often defined as “the body's way of responding to change.” This simply means that stress was created to be a good thing. If the body were not allowed to use this built-in response mechanism, there would surely be adverse consequences.

Stress becomes a “bad” thing when we allow it to turn against itself. Stress becomes “stressful” when we allow it to put undue pressure on us, forcing us to cope with too much, too often, or too soon. The body is forced to overtax itself in responding to change, over and beyond its natural capacity. We then begin to bite more than we can chew. We begin to feel buried deeper and deeper into a hole we cannot get out of. We gasp for air. We choke. We have allowed stress to overpower us.



The Organization as Stressor

A clear work stressor is the type of organization people work in. The nature of the business often dictates the culture, norms, pace, and relationships in the workplace. Organizations that deal with disaster relief, emergencies, money, media, health and the like have stresses inherent in the kind of work that they do. A person who decides to work in these organizations must accept the stresses as givens.

The Nature of Work

Another stressor is defined by the kind of work people do in an organization. Sales jobs are forever about targets and quotas. The medical profession is about saving lives, often demanding split-second decisions. Stock market traders, air traffic controllers, firemen, call center agents, assembly line workers, reporters, even fastfood delivery crew all work with clocks ticking like time bombs.

Pilots, molecular biologists, surgeons, telephone linemen, snipers, computer technicians, miners and scuba diving instructors work with great precision and cannot afford even the slightest error. Many many jobs have grave life and death consequences, and this fact makes them stressful by nature. CEOs, managers and supervisors are on this list, too.

People as Stressors

Let's face it: there are stressful people all around us! Every workplace will usually have the obnoxious, the envious, the braggart, the self-righteous, the lazy, the complainer, the gossip. The list is endless. The boss, of course, is often unfairly seen as the automatic stress icon.



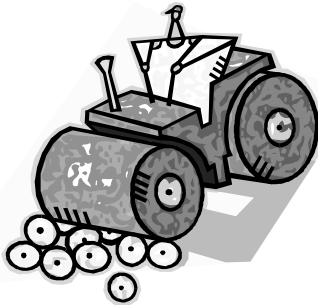
Personality-Driven Stressors

Some people just seem to be more stressed out than others. Perhaps it is because some people actually enjoy being stressed, whether or not they admit it. Called stress junkies, these workers feel incomplete when the going is smooth. They miss the jagged edges, bumps and near-hits. There are also some, with masochistic tendencies perhaps, who have to play the perpetually harassed, demanding pity or praise for their hard work.

Nuisance Stressors

Some stressors are simply unnecessary. Worrying about traffic when one left the house later than usual, losing sleep over a month-old assignment that is due tomorrow, or getting irritated about an officemate's bad moods create stress that one can live without. One can prepare for predictable traffic and deadlines. Another person's moods are beyond our control so why be perpetually surprised?

Power over Stress



Overcoming stress is a decision, a choice one make's for the sake of a peaceful existence at work. A stressor is a stressor because one allows it to be so. Simply put, one can control all kinds of

stresses because he/she can choose not to be stressed by them.

Attitude is the all-important factor. Those who triumph over stress are those who have decided that they will not let external factors wield their unwelcome power over them. Overcoming stress is a rational process, a willful act. One must think through stress rather than feel through it.

What to do

Three simple steps: identify, rationalize, decide. List down all the things that stress you, big and small. Then analyze each item. Why is this item a stressor? Is it within your control? What can you do about it?

It also helps to identify the consequences that each stressor brings to you. If the jeepney driver who cuts you in traffic goes away whistling a tune while you are still cursing right through lunch, shouldn't you be kinder to yourself? If your secretary still does not take a telephone message correctly, shouldn't you prefer one more round of training to an emotional outburst?

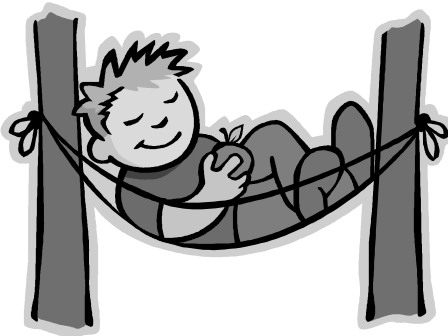
Rationalizing helps you see what you can or cannot do about a particular stressor. If it is outside your control, then the only thing you can control is how you view it. Chances are, you can eliminate it from your list.

It's entirely up to you.

Be kind to yourself

That attitude is a key determinant of stress control may seem impractical or downright absurd. It is difficult – extremely – sometimes. But if you decide not to be stressed about something, then it isn't a stressor anymore!

Wouldn't you rather be humming through your inbox and chatting with your boss as you would your best friend? Wouldn't you rather go home and enjoy your children's school stories rather than take out your bad day on them? Shouldn't you look forward to lunchhour as the time to relax with your officemates rather than use it to escape from them?



You can beat stress in a much more efficient, lasting, and cheaper way than a gym workout, massage, or vacation. Try adopting a no-stress attitude until it becomes a habit, and eventually a lifestyle and a way of life. Try it!

First published in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, People at Work section, March 12, 2006, p. 10

Where to get help when looking for a job

by Loree Cruz-Mante

Job search jitters usually begin – or intensify – where graduation jitters end.

Graduating students experience tremendous pressures before they earn the right to march up the stage. There are exams to pass, school requirements to complete, clearances to process, and fees to pay for diplomas, togas, sashes, and other graduation paraphernalia.

There is also the undefinable mix of emotions: of saying goodbye to friends, of missing the routines of school, of ending a life chapter that also marks one's entry into the "real" world. There is excitement about preparing to engage the world, but there is also anxiety about one's preparedness for it. There is hopefulness about entering the world of work, but there is also the fear of what it is like. There is enthusiasm about the experience of looking for a job, but there is also the insecurity about not really knowing how to go about it. Above all, there is the pressure – no, panic! – of finding a job, any job, as quickly as possible.

How do I find a job?



At the center of all this ambivalence is the all-important concern: how do I find a job? What kind of job will I look for? Where do I start looking? How long will it take for me to find a job? Will I ever find one? These are questions that nag and hound new graduates. They are very valid questions which have no easy answers. And very often, new graduates don't even know where or whom to ask.

The euphoria of finally being done with school fades quickly in the face of the realities of having to look for a job. It does not help that unemployment statistics paint a dismal scenario. It does not help that some parents wait impatiently at

the sidelines, anticipating the yet-to-come income to augment meager family coffers. It does not help that friends and former classmates seem to have found jobs quickly and that one is lagging behind. It does not help that new graduates cannot answer “What are you doing now?” without having to lie.



Unprepared for work

A major part of the anxiety is that school hardly prepares graduates for work. Career talks given to high school graduating seniors often come too late in the game and most likely have not sunk in by the time they decide on a college course. Very often, too, these talks are largely descriptive and do not delve into deeper issues of one's aptitude and fit for a job, including values, motivations, and expectations that will drive choices.

In college, new graduates often have little help with careers and career decision-making. They are often left alone to make the leap into employment without even the most basic training on job search.

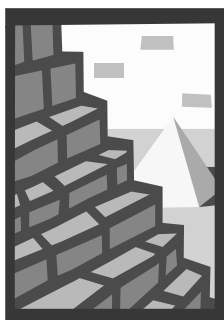
So it is that new graduates hardly know what to do or where to go after graduation fever has subsided and they must face a brave new world by themselves.



Structured process

Looking for a job is a structured process. In a sense, it has its own technology, governed by its own set of rules. The interesting thing about job search is that it has elements of both science and art. It includes scientific processes, such as research and rational decision-making. Its artistic elements include creativity, innovativeness and marketing sense. Add to that the elements of luck, fate, destiny, and as the God-fearing call it, purpose and mission.

The basics of job search CAN be learned, and new graduates would do well to learn them before they embark on job-hunting. Much stress is avoided by smart new graduates



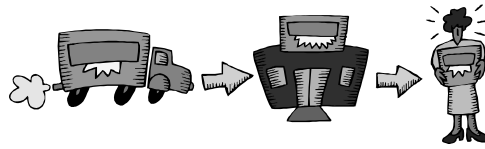
who study the rudiments before they actually take the plunge. They are usually better prepared to handle the physical and emotional rigors of looking for a job. In fact, studying how to look for a job before actually doing it provides practice for one of the most important factors of lifetime employability: lifelong learning. An insatiable passion for learning

provides an ever-expanding competency base so necessary for ensuring that one is employable at whatever stage in life.

Available help

There are so many aids to job-hunting these days that were unheard of only years back. The internet, job fairs, school guidance centers, and various multimedia resources are only a few. There is also the Public Employment Service Office (PESO), a non-fee charging multi-employment service facility of the Department of Labor and Employment (DOLE). PESOs are maintained by local government units (key cities and municipalities), NGOs, community-based organizations, state universities and colleges. There are websites dedicated solely to helping people find jobs, in addition to providing job search advice and inspirational literature. Phil-Jobnet and mytrabaho.com are two of countless sites. Media continues to provide help, including talk show discussions, film features, and dedicated programs. It is almost impossible to exploit the internet alone, not to mention multimedia materials that are easily available.

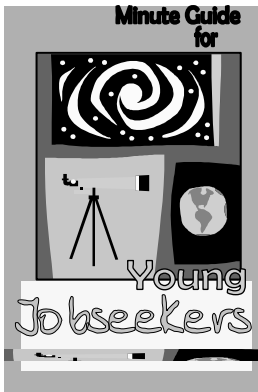
New graduates will benefit tremendously from training themselves (or seeking help) in the basics of job-hunting. One just has to invest time in researching, accessing, and studying these resources. Successful job search is not a hit-or-miss game; it is a planned, purposive and deliberate process which identifies its target and aims at it before it shoots away.



Two new resources

I just finished writing two career guidance books for the DOLE and the International Labor Organization. I also did the graphic design for both books which will be launched soon.

The first book is an easy-to-read, user-friendly and simple how-to-find-a-job guide for youth seeking work. Entitled *Minute Guide for Young Jobseekers*, the guide is designed to provide step-by-step help and comes in a handy size that fits jeans pockets, small handbags, and backpack compartments. It



deals with all stages of the job search process, beginning with how to assess one's competencies, motivations, and appropriate work environments. It provides information on how to write a resume, do impressive interviews, research for openings in both the advertised and hidden job markets, use personal networks, and negotiate compensation packages. It also contains interesting tips, paper exercises, inspirational articles, a brief on entrepreneurship, and a listing of useful web links. An attractive and colorful graphic design makes it appealing to young adult readers.

To be released with the *Minute Guide* is *Guiding Youth Careers: A handbook for those who help young jobseekers*. This is an easy-to-use handbook for trained guidance counselors, parents

and guardians, and even peers or *barkada* to whom the youth go for career advice. It is simple to understand and is an excellent companion to the *Minute Guide*.

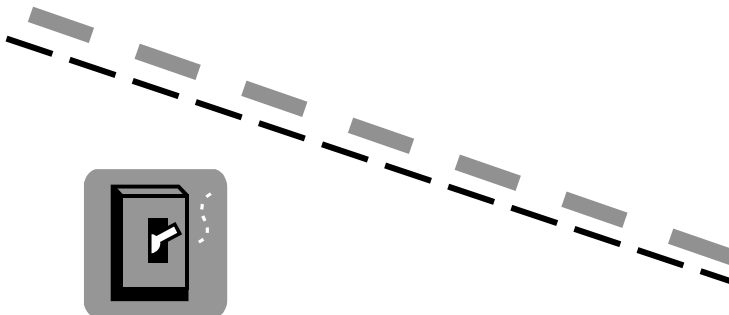
No fear

New graduates embarking on job search need not fear. Anxiety will only erode self-confidence and hopefulness and add to the stress inherently present in job search. If new graduates will pause before they leap, study the landscape, “survey the terrain,” as it were, before plunging in, they will be better fit to engage the job search process with alertness, vigor, and enthusiasm.



Help for job search abounds. It is there for the taking. But it won't come to you. You'll have to press that button if you want it. It's always your choice to do your job search blindly or intelligently. As one big and old enough to enter the world of work, this may well be your initiation to deserve the opportunities for gainful employment just waiting for you.

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Are you driving those jobs away?

By Loree Cruz-Mante

There are countless reasons why people find jobs every single day. There are probably as many reasons why some people do not find them.

Today, more than at any other time in the past, advice for jobseekers is there for the taking. The internet alone provides such a wealth of information that if jobseekers spent all of their time absorbing what they can find there, they would have no time left to look for a job!

Much has been said about how to look for a job but not much about what jobseekers do to drive jobs away. Let me share some observations that jobseekers would do well to remember as they go through the exciting journey that is job search.

Not knowing what you're looking for

Far too many jobseekers have absolutely no idea what they're looking for. The "any job will do" mentality may be understandable for new entrants into the world of work, such as new graduates or housewives looking for work after the children are old enough to be left alone. But for those who have known what it is like to work, this thinking is unacceptable.

Consider this: Even when one shops at the Greenhills tiangge, sales clerks ask: "What are you looking for?"

Knowing that you are looking for clothes and not wicker baskets certainly directs the search. Specifying work outfits is even better, and narrowing it down to blazers is best.

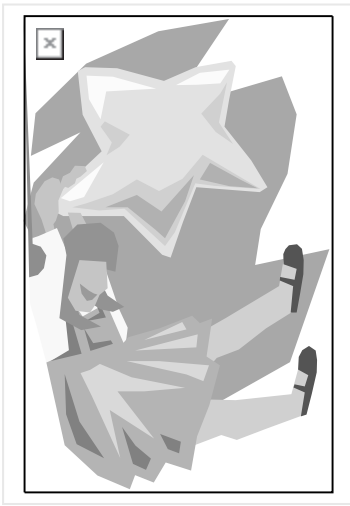
Knowing what kind of job you are looking for does not come when you are lining up at the job fair. It is the product of carefully assessing who you are, what



you can do, what drives you, and which environments you thrive best in. It is a process that you must do before you venture out.

You won't find a job—at least, not the one that fits—if “any job” is good enough. You must set the specifics of what you want. It's not for you to find a job and then force yourself to fit. Forcing a fit is probably why job satisfaction is such an elusive concept.

Dreams with no foundation



Dreams will forever remain dreams if you don't put a foundation to hold them up. Your dream job can only be realized if you work towards it by making yourself capable of claiming it at some future time.

I once interviewed someone who wanted to be a newspaper columnist. Her timetable: ASAP. I asked what kind of portfolio she had to show that she was a writer recognized enough to justify a column. She said she hadn't yet written a thing in her life! And did she plan to start writing soon? Not really, she said, because she was going to spend her time applying to be a columnist.

Respecting the process

A young lady applicant approached a man cleaning the glass doors of a fastfoods outlet. She handed her biodata with a photo paper-clipped to it. The man hesitated since his hands were wet and dirty but the lady insisted. He grudgingly dried his hand on his pants, took the biodata by one corner, crumpling it a bit. He approached the counter girl who was fixing a halo-halo order. She took the biodata with hands sticky with syrup and looked for the manager.

In what condition did the biodata arrive in the manager's hands? Given the applicant's carelessness, it can also be assumed that her photo was not signed and when separated from her biodata, who on earth would know who she was?

Such carelessness does not portend well for a future employee. If this jobseeker cannot respect the process enough to ensure that her precious biodata does not have glass cleaner or garbanzos smudged on it, what kind of worker would she be? Of course, she would probably blame the man if she didn't get a call.

Neglecting your homework

If you're truly interested in a job, you would want to know as much as you can about it.

A young man applied for an editorial assistant position in the lifestyle section of a newspaper. When asked what he thought of the layout, he said: "I haven't seen your paper yet." Another young applicant eyeing a marketing post in a personal care company was asked about the company's products. She had no idea what they were.

Research is a key component of your job search. There is no way you can pull off an interview if all you do there is showcase your ignorance. There is nothing more irritating to an interviewer than applicants who know nothing of the company they want to hire them.



Wrong method

Some jobseekers mistakenly give most of their job search time to the methods that are least successful. Networking, for example, has been found to be 70-80% effective. Print and internet ads do not even come close. And yet, many jobseekers hardly ever make use of their networks and would rather compete for advertised jobs.

This is not to say that jobseekers do not find jobs through the advertised job market. But if jobseekers do not look in the hidden job market

(those jobs that are not advertised) through their networks of friends, family, etc., they



miss out on opportunities where their chances of employment are even greater than the highly competitive advertised job market. Studies show that 80% of jobs are not advertised but are disseminated through the company's network of clients, customers, employees and associates.

Jobseekers would do well to appropriate time wisely. It is smart for you to do all the search methods as much as possible (networking, print and internet ads, job fairs, search firms, targeted mailing), but you should spend more time on those methods that deliver the greater success.

Avoiding pitfalls

Job search is an exciting time of life. If things are taking longer than you expected, it might be time to think about the things you do that make jobs go farther away from you instead of closer. It could be that you overprice yourself, or that you come on too strong, or that you give ambiguous and vague responses. Or that you simply smile too much, or appear sloppy, or don't look people straight in the eye. The worst thing you could do, of course, is to complain about your former employer or badmouth your boss.

In job search, how not to find a job is just as important as how to find it.



First published in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Working People section, February 18, 2007, p. 10

Transitions are life-changing experiences

by Loree Cruz-Mante

Transitions. They are the stuff that life is made of. They color our lives from birth to death. We go through them painlessly or painfully, depending on how well we accept them as part of being alive. We either victoriously lord over them or cower helplessly under their control.



Going beyond

The word “transition” comes from the Latin word “transire” which means “to cross over,” or “to go beyond”. Coined in 1551, the word remains very much in modern-day usage, for there seems to be no substitute word to describe the life phases all humans go through. A baby transitions from being infant to toddler, the young boy to a teenager, the single lady to a wife, the man to a father, on and on and on. The final transition is from life to death when we graduate to eternity.

A special kind of transition is when one moves from being employed to unemployed, or from being employed to retired. Within this category of transitions is the often unexpected change brought about by retrenchment. Thrust into a situation where one is forced — often unwillingly — into a new career search, people who have been let go face the unfamiliar territory of looking for a new job, starting a business, or retiring. All of these may be fraught with pain.

The idea of “going beyond” is one that can have a dramatic impact on how one views retrenchment and the transition that it brings about. When one goes beyond something, we think of someone able to pass through a hurdle, leap over an obstacle, land safely on another shore. We think of a triumphal crossing of the bar and moving on to wherever is the next stop.

Change and transition

Change triggers transitions. A change event starts off a transition process, the primary mechanism for the human spirit to deal with change. Transitions are necessary responses to change. They can either be painful or painless. Everyone decides how he/she wants to transition.

Nothing seems to be truer of transitions than that one must go through them and eventually, one can actually succeed in going beyond them. As many of my retrenched clients will testify, career transition can be one of the most meaningful times of one's life—that is, if those who go through them fortify themselves with the faith and courage on which the ability to go beyond is anchored.

Transient and temporary

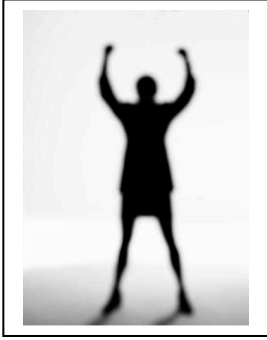
A related word, “transient” also comes from the same Latin root word. It characterizes transitions and denotes something temporary, fleeting, impermanent. Transitions are transient. Their very essence is movement from one point to another. They are never static nor permanent.

So, if the act of going beyond is transient, then there seems to be no sense in belaboring the grief, tarrying on what is past, and getting hooked on phantoms. To go beyond is to move forward, to forge ahead, to charge fearlessly into the unfamiliar.



Dealing with Transitions

We can all benefit from facing transitions head-on, talking about them, understanding them, using them to our best advantage. We can make our inevitable transitions the life-changing experiences they are meant to be. We want to go through and beyond transitions with a sense of exhilaration and gratitude, rather than with pain and grief.



And, after we have moved on and then look back to the time when we were standing at the threshold, we can say confidently: I have crossed the bar. I have gone beyond. I have leapt and landed safely on another shore.

First published in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, People at Work section, July 23, 2006, p. 10

Keeping the hope (even if you have no job)

by Loree Cruz-Mante and Marivic R. Gustilo

Why do we welcome the new year with a bang and not a whimper, with high hopes and not dismay and disgust? Why do we make merry instead of grieve? Or why do we try to rejoice even when we may not have too many reasons to do so?

Hope is the answer

The answer is simple: HOPE. Whether or not we believe it, hope represents the only reason there is to go on living. Without it, there is no point marching on into a new year or even into the rest of our lives.

Those who find themselves without a job as the new year comes are probably in a more challenged position than those



who simply move on with their careers. This is because they must look for a job in the incoming year. They must join the ranks of jobseekers like themselves, whether retrenched, fired, resigned, just graduated from school, returning

entrants to the workforce or retirees seeking new careers. Those who have to look for jobs in the new year must compete in a highly competitive marketplace and hold their own against countless others claiming their stake in the world of work just like themselves.

The mere thought of looking for a job after the heightened merry-making of the Christmas season is enough to make faint even the strong and hardy. But because of hope, there is reason

to forge on confidently and engage the task of job-hunting with spirited gait.

Optimism

A key component of hope is optimism, the ability to view things in a positive light and to see the good in all things. Optimism makes it possible to bounce back after being derailed by setbacks and obstacles. To the optimists, problems are not considered hindrances but opportunities for learning and growth. In that sense, obstacles are welcomed rather than avoided.



In his book *Learned Optimism: How to change your mind and your life*, Martin Seligman notes three components which differentiate optimists from pessimists in the way they understand adversity and failure.

Permanence

Optimists see adversity as impermanent, temporary, fleeting. Pessimists, however, see failure as a forever thing. Pessimists will say: “I will never find a job” while optimists will say, “I didn’t get this job. I have four more leads to pursue.”



Pervasiveness

This component describes the extent to which people allow failure to affect them. “All companies are looking for younger people” is a sweeping pessimistic view of the entire employment scenario. On the other hand, optimists will say: “This particular company wants younger people but there are

others who want more mature and experienced workers like me.” This statement rightly limits the specific failure to its proper scope and reach.

Personalization

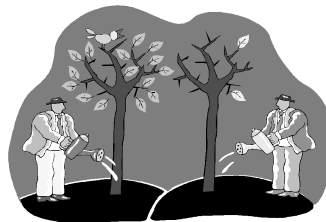
Pessimists consider failure to be negative and internal. They believe that there is something wrong with them as persons, making them unacceptable to employers. “I am not marketable,” pessimists will say. Optimists, on the other hand, view failure as positive and welcome. “I have competencies other companies need which this particular company which has rejected me does not.”

Optimism in the job search



Optimistic jobseekers stand a better chance of viewing the job-hunting process as life-giving and worthwhile. They can take rejections at face value, never allowing failure to diminish their innate goodness, capabilities, and worth as persons and workers. They allow themselves to feel upset and to mourn their loss, then use their setback to be the launch pad from which they leap forward and take control of their future. They keep things in perspective and confine the effects of adversity to their appropriate space and time.

Jobseekers who nurture their optimism and use it to propel them through the difficult and trying challenges of looking for a new job in the new year will survive and thrive. They will grow with every experience and be grateful for what they learn from each one.



And because they have the ability to convert the most dismal to the brightest of experiences, they will also be those

workers that companies would love to have among their ranks. It may be a matter of time before they are “discovered” but it will come.

Starting with hope

The new year is probably the best time of year to start anew. A new optimism, a new hope and a new year go well together. And so does the tug at the heartstring that tells us that even in times when all is well, it is best for us to plan to fail and to rise again and again and again, because it is there where real success has its definition and meaning.

First published in the Philippine Daily Inquirer, Working People section, January 14, 2007, p. 10



Starting right in your first job

by Loree Cruz-Mante

So, you've landed your first job! Fresh out of college, you find yourself in new and exciting territory, one that lies waiting for you to conquer. No other job will be like this one because only one job will have the distinction of being your first.

Starting your first job right is critical to your future. Getting hired is one thing; keeping a job is another. Here's what so many others before you have learned about starting right the first time.

Look and listen

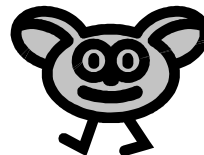
Your new work environment is not school. Neither is it the company where you did your internship or on-the-job-training. Here, you're the new kid on the block, the greenhorn, the neophyte. You're the strange newcomer, the one who's joining a group that may have been together for some time. You're the



new addition who hasn't yet built relationships, even if you've already made waves with your impressive biodata.

While you're the eager beaver ready to jump in with your new ideas and fresh enthusiasm, it's best to be low-key. Listen and observe keenly what's going on before you make any public comments. Keep your initial impressions and tentative judgments to yourself. Don't jump at articulating your opinions no matter how confident you are that your suggested changes will work.

Look and listen for anything that will paint a picture of the company's culture for you. All your observations will be important clues to how you will conduct yourself in this new environment.



Follow social and work norms

Be sensitive to the unique character of your new company. Observe how people welcome (or not welcome) you into their circle, the first things they say (or not say) to you about working there, how they orient (or not orient) you about where the canteen or restroom is. Watch how your officemates address the boss, how they relate with each other. Take note of how long their breaks are, how punctual or late people are, how early they go home.

Is the pace slow or feverish? Are people happily working or grumbling most of the time? Is the boss aloof or friendly? Are your officemates eager to report for work and hesitant to leave at the end of a workday or vice versa? What seems to drive people: achievement or mediocrity?

Do not disregard established norms, practices and habits. This is not a good time to break the rules or speak out against them. You need more time to understand why things are the way they are, and you certainly cannot improve on them unless you fully appreciate where they come from or why they exist.

Work double time at learning

The first few days, weeks and months are usually high-energy learning times for new hires. The quantity and quality of training will differ with each organization but it is always best to learn as quickly and as enthusiastically as possible. In many cases, training is an additional burden for supervisors whose workload may not lighten just because they have you to train. Don't add to the strain by not being attentive, alert or receptive, thus requiring your supervisor to spend more time for you than planned.

Supplement the training you receive by teaching yourself what you can learn on your own. Visit the company website as often as you can. Read company manuals. Dig into the



company's history and into newsletter compilations, promo materials and posters, and photos and awards framed on the office walls. Understand the company's strategic framework and make it your own.

Pinch yourself every morning and tell yourself that by proudly displaying your company ID on your chest, you declare that you are now "one of them."

Cultivate relationships

Developing trust and respect is key to thriving in your new job. Establish relationships in your workplace, both personal and professional. Even as officemates gain confidence that you can contribute to the company's good, they must also enjoy your presence in the workplace. Your first few months at work are a showcase of who you are and what you can do. They are also the period where lasting impressions are formed about your trustworthiness and respectability. It's best to show yourself both as a good worker and a good person to have around.



Farther down the road

After your (hopefully pleasant) initiation into the world of work, it is then time to look farther ahead. Make sure you keep these things top of mind:

Lifelong learning – These days there is no longer such a thing as lifetime employment. Shifting workplace realities should make workers prepared to have several employers in their lifetime. And there is no better shield against unemployment than competence. If you want a secure future, invest in lifelong learning. Add to your ever-increasing list of competencies, capabilities, and achievements. Learn all you

can, so that you can do many things well. This means you can have multiple careers because you have a wide range of skills to offer.

Maintain your networks – Even as you are employed in your first company, do not stop keeping your personal and professional networks active. Keep tab on what your friends and colleagues in other companies and businesses are doing in the same way that you keep them posted on where you are and how you are doing.

Market yourself - This does not mean that you are constantly looking for a job and will leave company after company at a whim. Marketing yourself means that people know what you do best so that they will remember you when a good opportunity arises. You must try to make yourself visible both within the company and outside it.

Keep your dreams alive – Constantly keep your personal vision before your eyes. Don't lose sight of what you conceive your life mission to be. Periodically assess how your current employment and work challenges fit in your vision of the future. When you can no longer locate your current job, career or employer in your dream map, then perhaps it will be time to move on.

Always your first job

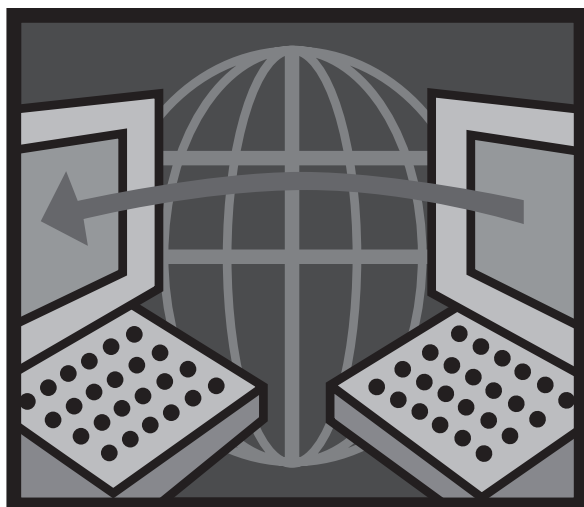
Your first job will always be your first. It will hold that title forever, no matter how many jobs you eventually have. You can always start right the first time and you should, because nothing will ever come close to the excitement and euphoria of that first time someone told you, "You are hired!"

First published in the Working People section of the Philippine Daily Inquirer, June 24, 2007, p. 10



internet links

- Ⓢ Government websites
- Ⓢ Employment websites
- Ⓢ Entrepreneurship websites
- Ⓢ Franchising websites



government websites

<http://www.dole.gov.ph>

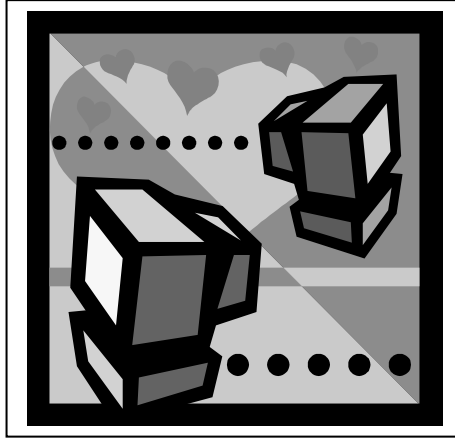
<http://www.ble.dole.gov.ph>

<http://www.ble.dole.gov.ph/peso/asp>

<http://phil-job.net>

<http://www.poea.gov.ph/>





The Internet links listed in this *Handbook* do not necessarily imply endorsement by the project holders, publisher or author. They are intended to help the user in launching his/her search with an initial listing of useful links sourced from the Google directory and other search engines. The jobseeker is encouraged to exercise discretion in the choice of websites to use and wisdom in determining the suitability of specific sites for his/her individual needs.

Although the sites were checked and found to be live or existing, we cannot guarantee the accuracy of information contained in them nor the validity and effectiveness of their specific processes.

employment websites

Source: Google Directory

[Jobsonline.com.ph](http://www.jobsonline.com.ph) - <http://www.jobsonline.com.ph>

Allows searching and posting of jobs and resumé submission for job seekers and paid employer listings. Includes free e-mail and listing costs.

[JobStreet.com Philippines](http://ph.jobstreet.com) - <http://ph.jobstreet.com>

Allows you to post your resumé or to search through a database of jobs in the Philippines. Features a job search agent that notifies you via e-mail about job openings.

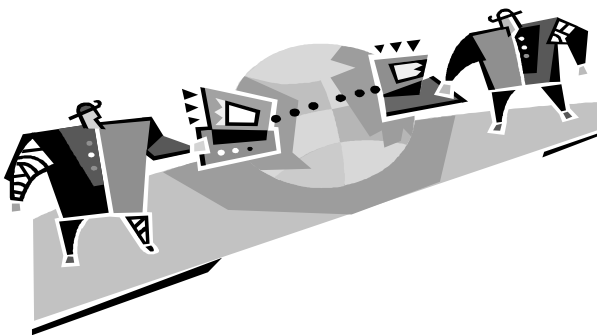
[JobIsland](http://www.jobisland.com) - <http://www.jobisland.com>

Offers free job posting, resumé submission and membership to career tips newsletter and fresh jobs mailing list. With database of employment opportunities and resumé. Free classified advertising - employment.

[International Skill Development, Inc.](http://www.isd-phil.com) -

<http://www.isd-phil.com>

Recruitment of professional and skilled workers from the Philippines. Site includes list of services, client database and registration, mission, and vision.



Manpower Philippines -

<http://manpower-philippines.com.ph>

A portal site for the manpower and recruitment industry in the country. Features agencies, jobs, and interview schedules.

Best Jobs Philippines -<http://www.bestjobsph.com>

Contains job and resumé listings in the Philippines with resumé submission and email job alerts for jobseekers. Also has free job posting .

Jobaa.com Philippines -

<http://ph.jobaa.com/>

Job listings for computer, engineering, accounting, and pharmaceutical fields.

Q2 Search Inc. - <http://www.q2searchinc.com/>

An executive search company providing service and account management and committed to resolving its clients' recruitment requirements.



Source: Non-Google Directories



<http://www.mytrabaho.com> – Comprehensive listing of job vacancies in the Philippines; also has various value-added career services and information that can boost your job search and professional life, like My Trabaho Advice and book reviews.

<http://www.jobsdb.com> – Comprehensive listing of job vacancies in the Philippines and other parts of Asia, Australia and the U.S.A. It notifies the jobseeker of job vacancies through job alerts.

<http://www.pinoyworks.com> – Comprehensive listing of job vacancies all over the Philippines.

<http://jobsearch.monster.com/jobsearch.asp?q=&sort=rv&vw=b&re=14&brd=1&cy=PH> – An international job site that usually posts technical jobs and senior management jobs for global companies with Philippine operations.

<http://www.michaelpage.com.sg> -

An international job site that displays various job openings in a wide variety of industries with positions that have a global or regional role in the Asia Pacific region.

<http://www.ksearchasia.com> -

An executive search firm web site that posts job vacancies for rank and file, supervisory, managerial and executive level positions in the Philippines.

<http://www.avantipartnership.com/career.php> -

Has various job postings for technical and IT positions.





entrepreneurship websites



www.entreworld.org - Comprehensive resources and how-to information on all aspects of starting, operating, and growing a small business.

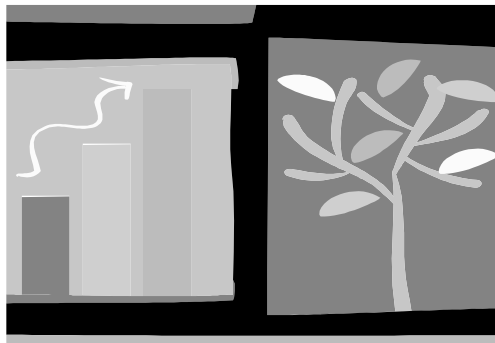
www.entrepreneur.com - Comprehensive business information, plus an excellent database of helpful articles.

www.score.org - A national non-profit service association with a corps of 11,500 volunteer members who are retired business professionals. They provide entrepreneurial counseling services free of charge. The site also provides a wealth of information on all aspects of starting, operating, and growing a small business.

www.rhondaonline.com - A website that provides a free checklist for business startups, the opportunity to subscribe to a free monthly entrepreneur newsletter, access to articles on entrepreneurship, and discounts for ordering *The Successful Business Plan* and *The Successful Business Organizer* (both are excellent resources if you are a first-time entrepreneur).

www.businessweek.com - Comprehensive resources on all aspects of business.

www.businessfinance.com - Provides a business funding directory of 78,000+ business loan and venture capital sources, plus free how-to guides on applying for business loans.



www.bplans.com - The most comprehensive site for sample business plans and how-to information. While they are primarily selling their own products, there are a lot of free useful and practical resources here.

www.nolo.com - Provides useful, up-to-date free legal information for small businesses. Links to other helpful websites.

www.learninglibrary.com - Provides a library of on-line training courses in entrepreneurship and starting your own business. Click the "Browse the Library" button on the home page and select the "Small Business" category to see a listing of courses available.



www.fastcompany.com - Has two parts under the Career Zones section that deal with small business/self employment (Going Solo and Build Your Business). Not as comprehensive as some of the other sites listed above. Much of the content is made up of reprints of their articles. Connected to the bplan.com site for business plan information.

www.filfranchisers.com - AFFI or the Association of Filipino Franchisers Inc. is a non-stock, non-profit national organization of Filipino entrepreneurs and businessmen, duly registered with the Securities and Exchange Commission. It was formed in 1997 by a pioneering group of men and women who recognized the potential for business expansion through franchising. This same group likewise identified the local franchising industry's need for a governing body that would police its ranks, safeguard its interests and promote its causes.



www.startup.wsj.com - A new site run by the Wall Street Journal. The site is comprehensive and has a lot of information on franchising. They use bplans.com for their database of sample business plans.

www.franchise.org - Hosted by The International Franchise Association this website provides a wealth of information on franchising, including free consultation and two free franchising newsletters.

franchising

Following is a selected list of resources consulted for this *Handbook*:

ILO materials

A Pocket Guide for Youth Seeking Work, 7 Steps to Work by I-YEN Indonesian Youth Employment Network, published by ILO Indonesia, 2005.

Mentor's Guide to Pocket Guide for Youth Seeking Work, 7 Steps to Work by I-YEN Indonesian Youth Employment Network, published by ILO Indonesia, 2006.

Career guidance: a resource handbook for low- and middle-income countries by Ellen Hansen, published by the International Labour Office, 2006.

Other print and internet resources

Career Guide 2003-2004 by JobStreet.com, 2003.

Life Career Planning Workbook (3rd edition) by Career Systems, Inc.

Business Trends Philippines



All Clip Art taken from Microsoft Office XP.

About the Author

Loree is a Human Resources and Organization Development Practitioner who has done consulting work with various government institutions (notably the Department of Labor and Employment), NGOs, employers' and workers' groups, faith-based and private corporations.

With the International Labour Organization (ILO), the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (ILO-IPEC), and UNICEF, she has worked on numerous projects on child labor, HIV-AIDS, employment, occupational safety and health, and labor inspection. She was co-Overall Consultant for the Philippine Time-Bound Program and the Strategic Framework of the National Program against Child Labor. She co-trained the National Training Resource Pool on Child Labor, and was Team Leader for an ILO-IPEC child labor program implementors workshop in Cambodia. She has conducted numerous capability-building workshops for multicultural audiences.

As an Accredited Consultant with Drake Beam Morin Philippines, she is a career counselor and trainer specializing in transitions and retrenchment. She is involved in promotive and preventive health care programs, particularly on asthma.

A writer, editor, and graphic designer, she has published three books for the ILO, two of them co-authored with husband James. She regularly writes on workplace issues for the Philippine Daily Inquirer, radio editorials for a leading station, and articles for various publications. She has launched *Biyaheng FX: Round Trips to Pinoy Life*, her first book in a series of short story collections.

She pursues a passion for the issues of child labor, patient education, career guidance, youth employment, and advocacy for decent work.

Loree has an A.B. English degree, cum laude, from the University of the Philippines, taught College Freshman English both at UP and the George Washington University in Washington, D.C., and is currently finishing her Masters in Development Studies at the UP Open University.

