

Job Acquisition in a *Shaky* Economy

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MRS PROMOTING
ABILITIES
Michigan Rehabilitation Services



Think Spring!!!

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Where Are We?

- 29% of the adults with disabilities in the United States are employed full-time (National Organization on Disability)
- 11.6% Unemployment in Michigan (CBS News, March 2009)
- “Approaching 17% Unemployment in Michigan”

What Employers are Saying about Challenges of Hiring PWD

72.6% - Nature of Work

63.7% - ?s About Cost of Accommodations

63.6% - Cannot Find Qualified People

(ODEP Survey, 2008, Researchers interviewed employers from over 3,797 companies across 12 industry sectors including high growth.)

What Employers are Saying about Challenges of Hiring PWD cont...

- 32.2% - Discomfort or Unfamiliarity
- 29.1% - Attitudes of Co-Workers
- 20.3% - Attitudes of Supervisors

(ODEP Survey, 2008, Researchers interviewed employers from over 3,797 companies across 12 industry sectors including high growth.)

Who's Hiring PWD?

- 19.1% of US companies hire PWD

Small companies 10.7%

Medium companies 22.6%

Large companies 53.1%

(ODEP Survey, 2008)

- Public more likely than private to actively recruit

(ODEP Survey, 2008)

School to Work Chasm



■ IDEA

- Education Act
- Entitlement
- Specially Designed Instruction

■ ADA

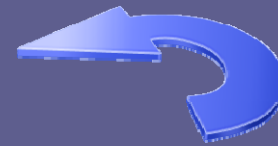
- Civil Rights Law
- Eligibility
- Reasonable Accommodation

Good Job Placement Builds on Good Vocational Assessment

- Assessment is a Process **Not** an Event
- Informational Interview
- Job Shadows
- Job Try Outs/OJE

Vocational Assessment

Job Dev/Placement



Relevant Work Experiences

THINK BROADLY

- Community Service
- Volunteerism
- Club Activities
- Individualized Vocational Training
- Summer Jobs
- Internships

How MRS and Schools Can Collaborate on Job Placement

- Schools (IEP)
 - Vocational Assessment
 - Career Exploration
 - In-School and Community-Based Work Experiences (Paid or Unpaid)
- MRS (IPE Related)
 - Job and Task Analysis
 - Rehabilitation Engineering
 - Tools, Equipment, Uniforms and License Fees, Job Placement
 - Job Coaching,
 - Personal Assistance Services
 - Post-Employment Services

It's About the Skills !

■ Soft Skills



AND

■ Job Skills



Employability “Soft” Skills (MI-NCRC 2009)

- Critical Thinking/Problem Solving
- Oral Communications
- Written Communications
- Teamwork/Collaboration
- Manage Conflict/Negotiation Skills
- Information Technology Applications
- Professionalism/Work Ethic
- Diversity
- Creativity/Innovation
- Lifelong Learning/Self Direction
- Ethics/Social Responsibility
- Customer Service

Job Skills

- Essential Functions of Jobs With or Without Accommodations:
 - Whether the reason the position exists is to perform that function,
 - Number of other employees available to perform the function, or among whom the performance of the function can be distributed, and
 - Degree or expertise required to perform the function.

Know Thy Self

- SWD must have realistic awareness re: job abilities and skills
 - Attitude, Motivation, Reliability
 - Leadership, Initiative
 - Social, Communication, Teamwork Skills
 - Marketing, Customer Service Skills
 - Problem Solving Skills
 - Academic Skills
 - Technical Skills

And Thy Job Market

- What Does Your Community Produce?
- What Services Does Your Community Provide?
- What New Businesses are Starting Up in Your Community?
- Use ONET to Search for Career Outlooks



How To Locate Leads

- Traditional Job Seeking – Leads Come to You
 - Newspapers and Magazines
 - Michigan Works! (Talent Bank)
 - Job Hot Lines
 - Employer Websites
- Hidden Job – You Look For Leads
 - Networking
 - Cold Calls
 - Meeting With Employers
 - On Site Applications
 - Advertise Yourself
 - Pounding Pavement

What SWD Need to Know About WOW

- Everyone Starts at the Beginning – (Normalize the Process)
- Jobs Are Hard to Get (Everyone Gets Turned Down)
- Businesses are Not a Special Ed Classroom
- It's Just the First Step – Not the Rest of Your Life!



Teaching Job Skills Using the Job Search

- Keep Log of Activities
 - Develops Writing and Organizational Skills
 - Improves Customer Service Skills
- Coach and Practice Phone Skills
- Use the Computer
 - Develops Technical Proficiency
- Work at it Daily
 - Strengthens Independent Work Skills

Self Determination Put into Practice – Job Searching is an Active Process



- Understand Strengths and Limitations
- Express Self-Confidence
- Implement Organizational Skills
- Consider Options/Generate New Solutions
- Ask for Assistance
- Monitor Performance/Self Evaluate
- Solicit Feedback from Co-Workers/Management

Build and Develop Your Resume

Include: Community Service, Volunteer Activities, Club Activities/Experiences, Education/Training, Technical and Academic Skills, Personal Attributes, References



Free Resume Assistance:

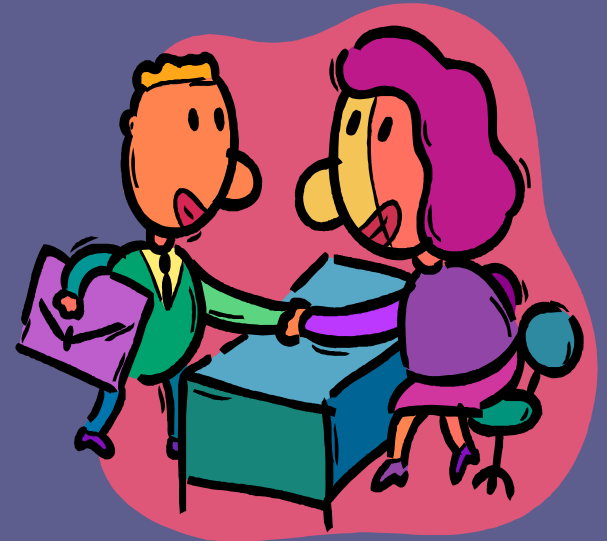
<http://www.pongoresume.com/content/11/subscription-options.cfm>

<http://office.microsoft.com/en-us/templates/CT101449251033.aspx>

<http://www.resumetemplates.org>

Interview Preparation

- Prep for Most Frequently Asked ?
 - "Tell me about yourself?"
 - "What is your greatest weakness?"
 - "How do you handle criticism?"
- Research Company
- Mock Interviews



When to Disclose Disability?

- Weigh Pros and Cons – (Disability disclosure is not necessary unless an accommodation is being requested.)
- No Exact Right Time or Way
- Confidential Time
- Allow Time for Questions
- Prior to or at Offer of Employment

How to Ask For Accommodations

- Practice First – Develop a Script
- Discuss Needs
- Keep it Positive
- Offer Practical Suggestions



NetworkNetworkNetwork!

GO GLOBAL!

- Friends and Neighbors
- Family Members
- Club and Church Leaders
- Teachers, Counselors and Coaches
- Mentors



Family Involvement

- Engage Families
- “Work” at Home
- Develop Social Skills
- Encourage Developmental “Work” Activities
 - Babysitting, Raking Leaves, Shoveling Snow...
 - Volunteer Work
- Educate Families About IDEA vs ADA
- Avoid Sugar Coating the WOW
- Ask Families **NOT** to “Talk” to Employers

Patience/Persistence are Essential Strategies



- Try, Try, Try Again
- Stay Positive
- Focus on Your Goals
- Adjust your Timeline
- Keep Track of Your Efforts
- **DEBRIEF-LEARN FROM MISTAKES**

Compromise May Be the Key

- Expand Work Interests
- Take Risks by Exploring New Jobs/Settings
- Flex Your Time: Nights/Weekends
- Split Your Shift
- Reduce Your Desired Hours of Work
- Combine Work/Volunteerism
- Temp Employment

Hiring SWD – How to Sell it to Business?

- PWD are often dependable, dedicated, hardworking and productive workers
- Focus on Ability
- Diversify their workforce
- Businesses that hire PWD are perceived as being more friendly by customers
- Hiring PWD reflects the customer base
- Hiring PWD increases company morale and productivity

Employer Incentives

- On-the-Job Training (WIA or MRS)
- WOTC (Work Opportunity Tax Credit)
www.doleta.gov/business/Incentives/opptax
- Disabled Access Tax Credit
www.ada.gov/taxpack.htm
- Incentive Money Coming to Michigan

Strategies to Support Employers

- Be Sensitive Regarding Time
- Have One Point of Contact
- Be “Johnny on the Spot” When There is a Problem
- Don’t Over or Under Sell YWD
- Encourage Employers to See There is More Than One Way to do a Task
- Offer Disability Education to Staff

How to Plan for Emerging Jobs

- Governor's Recovery and Reinvestment Plan – Energy Conservation, Green Jobs, Health Care, Education, Construction, Broadband
- Michigan's Hot 50
- Use Internet to Search for New Careers
- Stay Abreast of Current Events

