**Job Searching**

Overview: <http://districtcommons.org/jobclub>

This is the homework for the fourth meeting of the Job Club that may be especially helpful to people with disabilities.

**How to find a job:**

1.       Learn Computer Skills

Assessment

Typing, JAWS, Magic, WYNN

Word and Internet

2.       Learn Job Skills

Create a resume using a template

Submit resume to list of agencies

Learn interview and job skills

3.       Practice Skills by Volunteering

Volunteer places you want to work

Volunteer at a number of different places

Network while you volunteer

4.       Visit Job Sites

Make a list of places you would like to work

Make a calendar

Schedule informational interviews and informal visits

Other Suggestions:

5.       Visit Project LIFT DC

6.       Visit RSA, DORS, DRS, DOES, One Stops – DC, MD and VA Joblink

7.       Nonprofits: ICON, CLB, Service Source nonprofit job coaching agencies

8.       Skills Enhancement – classes

9.       Schedule A letter – verification of disability – gov or doctor

10.     KSA’s knowledge, skills, abilities – questions asked on gov job applications

11.       Job Fairs – DOES DC gov website

Links for people who are blind or visually impaired:

<http://www.wikihow.com/Get-a-Job-when-You-Are-Blind-or-Visually-Impaired>

<http://www.visionaware.org/starting-career-blind-low-vision>

<http://www.visionaware.org/employment-adults-blind-low-vision>

<http://www.doleta.gov/jobseekers/find_job.cfm>

Web sites that offer jobs for people with disabilities

1. [www.jobaccess.org](http://www.jobaccess.org/)

3. [www.esight.org](http://www.esight.org/)

4. [www.gettinghired.com](http://www.gettinghired.com/)

8. [www.chimes.org](http://www.chimes.org/)

9. [www.abilityone.org](http://www.abilityone.org/)

10. [www.melwood.org](http://www.melwood.org/)

11. [www.ncba-aged.org](http://www.ncba-aged.org/)

14. [www.didlake.org](http://www.didlake.org/)

Second Chance Employment Services DC

PRIDE DC

Perry School DC

Greater DC Cares DC

Dress for Success DC

**The Job Search**

From the Career Network Ministry Handbook:

1. **Traditional and Non-Traditional Approach**

The traditional approach is to look for ads to respond to, contact employers, write cover letters, and use of recruiters.

The non-traditional approach includes informational interviews, using the internet, and networking.

A. **Responding to Ads - Cover Letter Writing**

A cover letter should have three to four paragraphs, no paragraphs of over six lines long, with the longest one being the middle one or two, and the shortest one being the final, summation paragraph. The idea is to make the document brief and easily readable while still demonstrating a professional, thoughtful manner.

Carefully check your spelling and grammar.

Ask someone else to proofread.

(Dear Hiring Manager or Dear Jane Smith).

LinkedIn could be a good source for this information.

Keep the letter to less than one page.

Keep your sentences short and to the point

State your interests as they relate to the employer‘s requirements

Highlight your accomplishments and skills that match the employer's needs.

Stress the value you can bring to the company.

Tell potential employers why you're interested in working for them and their companies.

End your cover letter with an action statement. Indicate to the employer that you will take the initiative in contacting them regarding your resume.

Drop names in the first paragraph if you know someone in the company.

The second paragraph (or two) is the perfect place to mention specific experience that is targeted to the job opening.

The closing should be concise. Let the reader know what you want (an application, an interview, an opportunity to call).

B. **Internet Usage**

Using the Internet in your job search may not be easy. It crosses a variety of services and information resources. No single list, network, or resource will contain everything you need for a fully effective online job search.  If you do not have Internet access at your home, visit a library.

Listed below are some helpful sites to start with:

[www.quintcareers.com/top\_50\_sites.html](http://www.quintcareers.com/top_50_sites.html)

<http://www.linkedin.com/>

<http://ww.dice.com/>

<http://www.monster.com/>

<http://www.careerbuilder.com/>

<http://.indeed.com>

<https://www.ladders.com/>

<http://craigslist.org/> (job section)

[www.vault.com](http://www.vault.com) Fee to join, you can research companies, industries, careers, salaries, find jobs, sample resumes and buy industry guides.

Always Move General to Specific

While searching for employers and opportunities, look for job listings at several levels, thinking all the time about moving from general sites and resources to specific sites and resources.

Check the large recruiting sites to get the broad overviews and the largest searches you can.

Target the online journals and newspapers for your location, industry, and profession.

Scan through the appropriate professional and trade association web sites and journals to find those job listings marketed to particular job areas, occupational fields, industries, social or ethnic groups, and locations.

Do not skip employer websites, even if you found they have listed jobs in other locations. Many post even more job listings on their own sites, plus you can probably find a way to contact their Human Resource department to find out about any opportunities that are not posted.

If you do not have your well-written resume in plain text, it will not be easy to respond to ads found online.

If you do not attend local networking meetings, you could be missing a chance to meet the best person positioned to help you with your search.

o If you do not look at the jobs posted online, you could be missing a lot of local opportunities you have missed in other places.

o If you do not shut off the computer, how can you call the employers and speak with them about possibilities and convince them how much they need you?

Why use the Internet? Here are some reasons:

o ~~Current information at all hours of the day or night.~~

o The Internet does not recognize holidays, and it will not all go down at once for maintenance. It is there when you are ready to use it, even at midnight after finally getting the kids to bed.

o You can reach deeper into your local area, as well as take your search far beyond your regular boundaries.

o There are no geographic limits. There may be employers who would prefer to hire from their local area, but that does not mean you cannot accept the job and, if it is worth it, pay for your own move. You can also dig down deeper into your local area, finding the smaller employers within walking distance from your house who are dying to find someone just like you. Using the Internet in your search demonstrates leading-edge skills.

o Whether you found the job listing online or did research online before your interview, make sure you tell the employer. This means you not only know how to use a computer but you also know how to navigate this online morass.

o The Internet lets you meet new people and initiate new relationships with others in your profession or region.

o On the Internet, no one can see you sweat. You do not have to worry if you look okay or if everyone can see that your hands are shaking. Take your time and relax. Find the groups and folks that feel best to you and are discussing things that interest you, and then take your time getting to know them before putting your best electronic face forward.

o The Internet can help you explore career alternatives and options that maybe you had not previously considered.

o Companies and recruiters use the Internet to look for qualified candidates.

o Not quite happy with your current job? Is it the job or the career path you have chosen? Not sure? Explore! What sounds like fun? What are you doing now, and are there any ways you can take your skills and apply them in a new direction? You can find some self-assessment tools online, loads of occupations and disciplines to explore, and even lists of local career counselors and career centers to help you if you feel you need it.

Selecting the Right Sites

Try asking yourself these questions as you look at a site (these questions are provided only as a starting point for your evaluation and selection process; you are the only one who can say that a site and its resources works well or does not work at all for you):

- What type of information am I finding here?

o Is it a more formal or informal discussion?

o Is it business listings, academics, or nonprofits?

o Is it just job listings, or is there other useful information to be found?

- Are the job listings dated so that I know when they were added?

o Employers dislike getting applications and inquiries about jobs they filled a while ago, and it really wastes your time, too.

o If you do not see any dates, check the information for employers posting here. How much do they pay and how long will they post their jobs?

o If you still do not see any information, send an e-mail to the site‘s webmaster and ask how long they retain position listings in the database.

- How long is the information kept here?

o Is it updated or altered daily, weekly, monthly?

o Do information postings expire quickly or remain for an extended amount of time?

? You need to manage your online time. Many people start their Internet search in the same place every night and they spend so much time in those pages that they never get anywhere else. So why are you doing that?

o Every time you connect, start someplace new. Pick out a select list of general resources, use these to find more specific resources, and keep moving. Things change, but not so rapidly that you will miss something important if you check only there twice a week.

? Remember, move general to specific, but always remember to move!

o Visit the large information databases first. These include virtual libraries and large recruiting sites like America‘s Job Bank. Looks for links to information in your chosen field or industry. Repeat this search every few days, like Mondays and Thursdays.

o Move on to the smaller, more exclusive resources and services, including online resource guides and sites dedicated to your field or industry. Find links to employers or information in your field that can give you leads or networking contacts. Repeat this search every few days, say Tuesday and Friday.

o Use the search engines to locate new and hidden resources specific to your occupation and field. If you have a company you are interested in, search on the company name, any variations or nicknames it is known by, and names of its major products. Repeat this search every few days, maybe Wednesdays and Saturdays.

o Finally, shut off the computer and spend some time with your family, friends, and yourself. Take the seventh day and relax, do some reading, walk outside, and remind yourself that there is a world out there and people to talk to. Play with your dog or scratch the cat, and if you do not have a dog or cat, substitute whatever pet you have. All work and no play makes every one of us completely stressed out and candidates for heart attacks, which could keep us out of work for a long time.

A Few Final Thoughts

? The Internet cannot be the only resource you use for your job search!

? You must continue to utilize all contacts, information resources, and services available to you for the most effective and efficient search for employment. Continue to attend meetings, pick up the telephone and call people, and use the reference books in your local library.

? Limit your time online to one-quarter (25%) of the total time you can dedicate to your job search, unless you are a ?techie? who is working in an area related to computer networks or programming. In that case, move it up to one-half (50%) of your time, but make sure your skills are current in order to be you‘re most competitive.

? Use only four-to-six job search sites. If you use more than six, managing your resume can become overwhelming. When the job market is tight, companies stay off the big job boards because they get overwhelmed with responses. More job opportunities are moved to the specialty sites and industry specific sites, therefore requiring that you may need more sites.

? Never use ?Apply Now? on job search sites. Always go to the corporate site of the hiring company and find the job there, if possible. Do this because using ?Apply Now? often gets sent to a generic e-mail address that may never get checked. By going to the corporate site, you may get directly to a hiring manager‘s e-mail box. If you have no other way of applying, then (and only then) should you use ?Apply Now?

? Make it convenient for a hiring manager to check out your resume. Copy and paste a text version of your resume in the body of the e-mail that you send, and also attach a nicely formatted resume. Pasting a text version allows the hiring manager to do a quick scan of your resume and does not force him or her to take the time to open an attachment. (You can create a text version of your resume, in MSWord, by going to ?File? ?Save As,? choose ?Text? from the drop-down list. Then, open it using Notepad, and make sure the formatting is fixed. It is not a ?pretty? version, but you do not need ?pretty? for the body of an e-mail.)

? When you e-mail someone about a job, use specifics in the subject line. Use the subject line to include any relevant job code or job description.

? Update your resume on job search sites two-to-three times a week. This is very important because every time your resume is updated, it appears to be a new resume to a recruiter. You can change anything. Add a period, use your middle initial, change an abbreviation to the full spelling - change anything, just change it! You may want to ?Activate? a new resume weekly and change your heading information.

When using job sites that asks for a "Title" for your resume or a brief description, use something that sets you apart from other candidates. Make sure the title or description mentions what you are looking for and something honest about yourself. For example, you might say ?Web developer with personality,? or ?Electrician who plays well with others.??

? If you find a job posting where you do not fit everything on the ?ideal candidate? list, consider applying anyway. Remember that the posting is a wish list. If you really are interested in the job, apply anyway. The worst thing that can happen is your resume is placed in the ?Thanks, but no thanks? folder. (Note that applying is a waste of time, though, if the position requires you to speak Japanese fluently and you only speak English. Use your judgment.)

? When you e-mail a copy of your resume to a recruiter, make sure that what you name the file reflects you. For example, name the file ?SusanSmith.doc? or ?SusanSmithFabulousLawyer.doc? versus calling it something like ?resume2.doc,? which means nothing to a recruiter looking for your resume.

? If there are any associations in your field, whether or not you are a member, check out their web sites. Most of them have a career page somewhere. They are usually open to anyone, since they are always looking to reach out to people who might be interested in their field.

**C. Using Recruiters**

Why use a Recruiter? Sometimes a person has no time for job hunting, is looking for a particular position in a particular location, or needs confidentiality. In these situations, a recruiting service may be your avenue to a new job. More often than not, recruiters are people paid by employers to find appropriate candidates to fill the employer‘s job openings. Do not assume that a recruiter will do your entire job searching for you. There are two different kinds of recruiters:

? Those who are paid for their recruiting efforts regardless of the outcome

? Those who are paid for each referred person who is hired

Although a fee can be a factor in a hiring decision, this is not normally the case. Most companies have a recruiting budget that is separate from their personnel budget.

For example, a local manufacturing company had a reduction in force which required that one of the two systems engineers had to be let go. They kept the person who they paid a fee for because they had made a financial investment in him.

Retained Recruiter: The first kind of recruiter is called a ?retained? recruiter because they are paid a ?retainer? for their recruiting efforts, independent of whether or not open positions are filled. Presumably, if no positions were ever filled, someone more effective would eventually replace the retained recruiter. Retained recruiters include those who are actually employed in-house by the employer, as well as those whose work is based on a contract with the employer.

Contingency Recruiter: The second kind of recruiter is called a ?contingency? recruiter because their income is ?contingent? on whether or not a person referred by them is hired. In other words, they are paid a commission for every job opening that they fill. Anyone who is referred to an employer by a contingency recruiter comes with an extra cost associated with hiring them - the cost is the contingency recruiter‘s commission, which can add as much as 20% to 30% of the starting annualized salary. This may affect hiring decisions or the starting salary if an employer is particularly price sensitive.

Benefits of using a recruiter

? A recruiter acts as your agent.

? Often they proactively pitch your background to companies they know your profile matches. Recruiters have access to positions that are not always posted.

? They are typically dealing with the actual hiring manager verse the Human Resources Department, so this increases the likelihood of your credentials being seen by the right person.

? You will also likely be one of 3-5 candidates they are representing to this position, rather than 1 out of 100 resumes.

? They will ?sell? your background and you will become more than a piece of paper. This includes passing on reference testimonials, highlighting ROI examples and experience specific to the job.

? They often know inside information about the company, the person in this job previously, the benefits, salary range, corporate culture, feedback from others who worked there or have left, and the manager‘s background.

? They will serve as a career counselor, give you advice on your resume, on interviewing, and tell you the hot buttons of the job

? They will obtain feedback from the manager on how you interviewed, providing you some feedback and opportunities for improvements for future interviews.

**D. Associations**

Associations are a great way to network, get acquainted with other people in similar circumstances, and to access the hidden job market.

**Professional Associations**

Networking within professional associations puts you in contact with other people within your profession. Most association members will be glad to assist you in your job search.

**Industry Associations**

Industry associations usually have a large database of member-companies. Many times these companies have a direct link to/from the associations' web sites.

Alumni Associations and College Placement Offices

Alumni associations are a valuable network of contacts and an outstanding way to locate fellow alumni working in your professional field. Maximize the usefulness of your degree - networking professionals with whom you already have something in common!

Your alumni association may have a member database that you can access. In addition, many alumni associations, especially larger schools, have regional events that you can attend to meet alumni in your local area. A good place to find alumni information is on Facebook or LinkedIn. Don‘t over look Reunion.com or Classmates.com if you are coming up to a significant reunion year; people tend to join in those years.

Recent college graduates should utilize their college placement offices and become well known in the placement office. Consider asking the college placement office if they have a former graduate in your field who could be a ?job mentor?. Over time it helps to establish a good working relationship with the staff that works closely with recruiters representing different companies. Also, join some on-campus organizations and become an active participant. Many companies will recruit through the placement office and on-campus organizations/associations. Some companies will have a student "point person" on campus to establish good PR for the organization.

**E. Networking**

Introduction

According to Randstad, a job placement agency, close to 80% of all job opportunities are never advertised. Given this, a successful job search requires tapping into a ?hidden? job market. Networking is your number one resource for getting your foot into the door of this market.

What is Networking?

Networking is inviting others to help you. It is contacting people you know and telling them that you are in a career transition... letting them know that you need help. It is engaging them to ?be as Christ to you.? A function of the human condition is that people want to help one another. Let them. Ask them if they know of a job opportunity. Find out if they know someone who may be able to assist you in your job search.

…knock and the door will be opened to you.

What Networking Isn’t

Networking is not asking others to find you a job. You are responsible for your own job search.

Networking is not a series of cold-calls. You need to ask others to introduce you to people they know.

Networking is not a one-way street. It is establishing relationships and relationships involve give and take.

Types of Networking

Networking may come in all shapes and forms, but it generally falls into one of two categories: traditional and e-networking (social networking).

Traditional Networking.

Traditional networking involves thinking of everyone who can serve as a contact for you and then engaging them in your job search. You should make an extensive list of all people that you could contact.

? Family and friends

? Neighbors

? Co-workers (current and past)

? Alumni and Professors

? Classmates

? Local politicians

? Your doctors and dentist

? Your hairdresser, manicurist, supermarket clerk

? Your pastor/priest and fellow church members

? Community leaders

? Members of professional/trade organizations

? Conventions

? Charities and volunteer activities

? Cocktail parties and fundraisers

? Members of your gym

Traditional networking includes face-to-face meetings, phone conversations, information interviews and attendance at various social/professional events. It involves seeking out and making affirmative connections, but it also means capitalizing on opportunities that present themselves to you.

The basic rules of traditional networking:

? Set goals for yourself. It will help you to remain focused. Do you want to reach out to three people at each networking event? Do you want to learn about a company or industry? Do you want to establish four new contacts each week? Do you want to secure an introduction to someone attending an event?

? Be specific about the type of help you want. You must succinctly articulate what you are looking for and how they can help. Are you soliciting career advice or are you asking for a referral or recommendation? Do you want them to socialize your resume? Do you want the name of a resource or address?

? Be positive and energetic. What image are you conveying? Leave your baggage at the door. This is not the time to burden people with your trials and tribulations. Also, shut-off the ?negative chatter? in your head. Remember: You are interesting and worth speaking with.

? Listen. Observe the principle: ?Listen twice as much as you talk.? You are seeking advice …listen to it. Make eye contact. When speaking with one person, do NOT scan the room for your next opportunity.

? Build an ongoing relationship. Be prepared to give as well as receive. Networking is a two-way street of helping each other. If you want someone to help you, you need to be willing to help others in return. Also, if you are known to be a powerful resource for others, people will remember you. It will keep you visible.

? Be prepared. Always be prepared for an opportunity when it presents itself. You never know when a potential contact will be in front of you at the coffee shop or working-out next to you in the gym. So always be ready to make a contact and exchange business cards. Practice your self-introduction. Always be prepared to launch into your elevator pitch (See Section 3.3.2 Elevator Speech).

? Follow-up quickly on referrals you have been given. You are a reflection of the person who is helping you. Respect and honor what others are doing on your behalf.

? Write ?Thank-You? notes and follow-up with your network. Make sure your contacts feel engaged and appreciated for their actions. Keep them informed on the progress of your job search. Let them know how you value them.

? Talk to everyone you come into contact with. Do not be afraid to tell them that you are out of work! You do not know who they are or whom they know. Someone you talk to may know someone, or even be someone in the specific company or type of company in which you are interested. It is not unusual for your network to go seven layers deep.

? Respect people‘s privacy. When sending out your resume via email to a distribution list, blind copy the distribution list.

Be prepared for rejection. It happens. Don‘t take it personally. Rejection just means that you are getting a step closer to the yes.

E-Networking (Social Networking).

Social networking augments your traditional network activities by creating a community of ?virtual? contacts. How? By engaging the power and resources of the Internet. Social networking facilitates making connections with people that you may never meet, otherwise. It places you into a virtual community and provides context to who you are and what you are interested in. This is particularly important if employers are using these sites to find prospective candidates.

What are the benefits of social networking?

? It removes the awkwardness some people feel about networking and making cold-calls. On-line contacts don‘t involve personal meetings or phone calls. It eliminates the fear that some people feel about making a first encounter.

? It expands your networking possibilities exponentially.

? It doesn‘t require a primary contact to facilitate the introduction.

? It serves to ?break the ice?, if you ultimately meet with the contact in person.

? The other party cannot see that you are anxious.

? You can engage or be engaged as you wish.

What are the disadvantages of social networking?

? Establishing a personal relationship on-line can be difficult.

? Information you place on the Internet is public and permanent. So, be careful about what you post in cyberspace.

? Putting someone in contact with one of your business contacts (by opening up contact list) can be risky. Referrals are a reflection of you. You need to vet these referrals in the same way you would a traditional networking request.

Where do you go to network on-line?

Social networking websites. These profile-driven sites have you create a personal profile. This allows you to cull through their membership for networking opportunities. They work on the principle of ?six degrees of separation.? It spins who you are, who you know, and what you know into a spider-web of potential networking opportunities. Examples of these services include: LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, and My Space.

Social Networking Tips

? Ensure that your profile is complete and compelling. Conversely, "an incomplete profile makes you appear lazy and does not showcase all your accomplishments and abilities," cautions Christine Hassler of The Huffington Post.

? Let your network know through your status updates that you seek a job and what kind.

? If you blog, link your blog content to your profiles and status updates.

? Include links to your Website/portfolio/blog in your profiles.

? Ask and answer questions through LinkedIn Answers .

? Research employers through company pages on Facebook and LinkedIn.

? Recommend people on LinkedIn and ask your contacts to recommend you.

? Participate in discussion forums and boards in your career field.

? See if professional organizations in your field offer social-networking tools.

? Always offer help to those with whom you connect and thank your contacts for their assistance and advice.

? Realize that even on sites with good privacy settings, your profiles may be less private than you think, and be careful about what you say and post on social-networking venues.

? Join groups that are relevant to your professional or personal interest.

? Invite your real-world contacts to join your networks, and invite contacts from one venue to join your network on other venues.

Chat Rooms, Virtual Meeting Rooms and Web Forums. These sites have informal settings, where participants discuss current events and topics of common interests. They are the 21st century version of a telephone ?party line? or a conversation at the water cooler. Services include:

? Itzbig, where matching candidates to jobs also is the centerpiece. Itzbig calls itself a "real-time interactive recruiting network, providing a way for job seekers and recruiters to come together online." The site uses "profile matching technology" to provide "a filtered set of qualified candidates to the recruiter and a filtered set of job matches to the candidate."

? QuietAgent, which claims to "evaluate every job, every day, so you don't have to." The site notes that with QuietAgent, "recruiters use rich toolsets to get two-way private connections with quality candidates."

? Climber.com, which helps you, the job seeker, "understand yourself and reveal what types of jobs/companies you will best fit." The Climber.com site states that it is "for people who are not necessarily actively looking for a new job, but rather who are open to recruitment by companies." The site enables seekers to "connect anonymously to recruiters, research companies and salary information, and refer jobs to trusted co-workers and friends."

? My Perfect Gig, "a members-only, private career network for engineering professionals where companies and talented individuals speak a =common language‘." (We've heard other anecdotal evidence of job seekers finding success on paid, private job boards.)

Vitruva, "a second-generation career website powered by an artificial intelligence job-matching engine." The Vitruva site says it "connect[s] talented professionals with highly qualified job opportunities instantly – in real-time."

? Jobzerk, which bills itself as the "world's first community and socially driven job site."

? OneWire, a site for finance professionals that "allows individuals to quickly and precisely map their experiences -- education, work, and life -- and distinguish themselves from their peers." The site goes on to note, that "firms use the same system to create a search for their ideal candidate. This mirroring of profile and search criteria allows for the precise matching of individual to opportunity."

Bulletin Boards. These are web sites that are generally run by trade or professional associations, colleges, or alumni associations.

So how do you make a contact?

? Review the various postings and look for someone who shares a common interest, appears to be well informed, or is knowledgeable about a topic that interests you.

? Sites generally post an email address of the participant. It may even provide the person‘s company, industry affiliation, and job title. Use this information to e-mail your contact.

Follow business protocols associated with traditional networking. For example, do not ask for a job. Be willing to give as much as you receive.

**F. Accountability Groups**

Accountability groups are a great way to focus your job search. Members of these groups will hold you accountable to "do what you say and say what you do." They may be formed based on professional interest, a common affiliation or demographics. Ideally, accountability groups are normally five to seven people, but may be as small as two to three people. Most importantly, the group meets regularly to discuss individual progress in the job search. In turn, they both give and receive encouragement, support and focus. Many meet at coffee shops or other inexpensive eateries with Wi-Fi access.

Some of the information on this page is modified from the Career Network Ministry Handbook available online at:

<https://partnerships.workforce3one.org/view/2001119455959701100/info>