

**BC Employment**

**and Assistance**

# **Independent Work Search Toolkit**



Ministry of  
Housing and  
Social Development

## How to Complete Your Independent Work Search

### 1. *Read your Independent Work Search Toolkit to:*

BEGIN YOUR WORK SEARCH – how to start and where to look for a job.

IDENTIFY YOUR SKILLS – take an appropriate amount of time with this, and if possible do it with a friend.

PREPARE YOUR WORK SEARCH MATERIALS – how to write a resume and cover letter, and complete a job application

GET READY TO MEET EMPLOYERS – how to meet employers and handle interviews.

### 2. *Complete A Work Search Inventory (See Appendix A)*

Ensure your work search is the most effective it can be.

### 3. *Conduct Information Interviews with Employers (See Appendix B)*

A worksheet is included with a series of questions to use for “information interviews” with employers about your particular employment choice.

### 4. *Complete a Work Search Activities Record (HSD77) (See Appendix C)*

Keep track of your work search activities, so that you will be able to demonstrate that you are actively looking for work.

NOTE: This document and the Work Search Activities form (HSD77) are available on the Ministry of Housing and Social Developments’ Internet site at: [www.hsd.gov.bc.ca/publicat/toolkit/](http://www.hsd.gov.bc.ca/publicat/toolkit/).

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## Introduction

The BC Employment and Assistance Program assists British Columbians in achieving their potential by moving people from income assistance to sustainable employment, and by providing income assistance to those in need.

## Reasonable Work Search

You will be required to demonstrate that you have been actively seeking work. You will be able to do this by completing a Work Search Activities Record (HSD77) (See **Appendix C**, page 25). Forms are available at your nearest Employment and Income Assistance Office. Reasonable efforts are demonstrated by the preparation and distribution of an up-to-date resume; and the provision of a signed Work Search Activities Record. Your Record must indicate the following kinds of information:

- date;
- type of activity;
- location of activity;
- contact names and phone numbers; and,
- the results of your work search.

Other relevant documents may be included to help you keep track of your activities and to provide proof of your work search activities. These could include:

- photocopies of application forms completed and submitted to employers;
- photocopies of cover letter(s) sent to employers; and
- job descriptions or newspaper advertisements of jobs you have applied for.

Your work search should demonstrate regular and ongoing attempts to secure employment not restricted to a specific or narrow job category or wage range. Examples of effective activities include:

- phone inquiries;
- fact finding interviews;
- cold calling potential employers;
- networking with friends, neighbours, previous employers, colleagues or other social contacts;
- submitting applications for employment;
- participating in employment interviews;
- responding to newspaper advertisements;
- attending workshops for resume preparation or employment search; and
- submitting job applications.

The Work Search Activities Record (HSD77), is provided to help you record your activities. Completion of this form is a requirement.

If you return to the ministry following your work search, you need to bring your resume and your Work Search Activities Record and be prepared to discuss with ministry staff the following:

- What methods you have been using to find work;
- What kinds of work you have been looking for;
- What employers you have met with recently (employers may be contacted);
- What future job interviews you have scheduled; and,
- What Internet sites you have been using to search for work.

Also be prepared to discuss your use of any of the following in your work search – local employment agencies, Human Resources and Skills Development Canada (HRSD), community skills centres, university/college libraries and job placement offices, Chamber of Commerce, local union halls, seasonal employment offices, friends, family, neighbours, teachers, former employers and co-workers.

## Beginning your Work Search

### *The Basics*

Looking for a job is a full-time job in itself. In today's labour market, it will take time, commitment and organization to find a job.

It is essential to be prepared for your job search. To start, you must:

1. Be familiar with the product you are trying to sell: **You**.

You need to know what you are good at, what skills you have to offer employers, and what kind of work you are most interested in.

Everyone has skills, and everyone has interests. It's important to start your job search with a clear idea of who you are and to look first for a job that you'd like to do, because you will work harder to get it and do better at it. (See **Identify Your Skills** section, page 8.)

2. Find out what jobs are out there, and how they fit with your skills and interests.

There are many resources within your community that can help you learn about different types of jobs, ranging from your local newspaper and public library, to Human Resources and Skills Development Centres, union halls, and provincial government programs. (See **Programs to Assist You**, page 17.)

The Ministry of Housing and Social Development can provide you with a list of community resources by calling **1 866 866-0800**. Your best source of information about work, however, is probably even closer to home: your friends, family, and neighbours.

You might want to ask them about their own jobs (for example, how they like them and why), and what they know about other types of jobs.

### 3. Begin to make a list of possible employers.

Once you've decided what kind of jobs you want to search for, you'll need to prepare a list of possible employers.

Again, there are many resources within your community that can help you. Remember to look in your local Yellow Pages, where area employers are listed under specific job categories, and don't forget about your family and friends.

### 4. Prepare a resume.

Most employers ask for a resume, so it's best to have one prepared before you begin knocking on doors.

A resume is a one- to two-page summary of your skills and accomplishments. It is meant to 'sell' you to an employer, just like an ad on television is designed to sell a bag of potato chips or a new car.

Before you can write an effective resume, you need a good sense of what your skills are, what you'd like to do, and where you'd like to work. Only then can you make a good sales pitch. (See the **Preparing Your Job Search Materials**, page 11.)

### 5. Work out the best way for you to approach possible employers.

You can approach possible employers in person, over the telephone, by e-mail, or by mail. The approach that works best for you depends largely on your own personality, the strength of your work history, and the type of business or industry you are interested in.

## *Ways to Look for Work*

There are a number of different ways you can look for work, each with its own benefits. Be aware that each employer may be different and do your research to decide which method is best.

### **In Person**

This is often the most effective approach. Showing up in person shows self-confidence and can impress employers who are looking for outgoing people. You can create a good first impression through your appearance and manner. This first impression can go a long way to make up for any missing qualifications or skills.

### **By Telephone**

Approaching possible employers by telephone is faster and less time-consuming than trying to visit them in person. A telephone call is also harder for employers to ignore than a letter. This approach requires confidence and good telephone skills.

### **By Mail**

Sending a cover letter and resume to an employer by mail allows you to carefully highlight your skills. However, many employers will ignore letters and resumes unless they are sent in response to a specific ad. Telephone and in-person visits both work better for first contacts with possible employers.

### **By Computer**

Some employers list available jobs on their web sites or on sites that serve as electronic job banks. You may find jobs listed on the Internet that are not listed anywhere else. If you are considering relocating, the Internet is a good place to look for work in other locations, like BC WorkInfoNet at: [www.workinfonet.bc.ca](http://www.workinfonet.bc.ca).

## *Where to look for a job*

Techniques for finding jobs have changed a lot in the last few years. It used to be that most people found jobs through the want ads in the local newspaper. To find work today, however, you must be prepared to do much more than look at the newspaper.

The two most effective ways to find jobs now are through:

1. personal contacts: family, friends, teachers, previous employers and co-workers; and
2. approaching employers directly and asking about job openings in their company or in their industry.

*Other ways to find jobs:*

- conduct informational interviews with employers involved in the type of work that you are interested in (See **Conduct Informational Interview Worksheet** in Appendix B, to assist you with this.);
- check the job listings at local Human Resources and Skills Development Centres, college and university placement offices, provincial, federal and municipal government recruitment offices, and on the Internet;
- watch for 'help wanted' signs in the windows of local businesses;
- register with private employment agencies, such as temporary/permanent office help agencies;
- respond to newspaper ads or ads in trade journals and magazines;
- place 'job wanted' ads in local newspapers, on bulletin boards around town, or on the Internet; and,
- visit seasonal employers (such as farmers, summer tourist bureaus or ski resorts) about a month before the season is to start, and follow up just as the season begins.

**Did you know?**

- ➔ Fewer than 20 per cent of job openings are advertised in the newspaper.
- ➔ Fewer than 50 per cent of job openings are posted.
- ➔ Most jobs are found through personal contacts.

**Networking**

Using your personal contacts is the most effective way to find a job. Networking simply means telling everyone you know that you are looking for a job. Most people are willing to help.

Start your networking by asking the people you know if they have heard of any job openings. You might also ask them to ask their friends and other personal contacts about any job possibilities.

## Identifying Your Skills

### *What Employers are Looking For*

To stay in business, all employers need good employees. It doesn't matter what the job is — serving tables at a restaurant or designing new computer software, all employers are looking for:

#### **People who can listen, learn and communicate**

Employers are looking for people who are able to listen to directions, to understand and absorb what they hear, and to communicate their thoughts and ideas to others.

#### **People who can analyze**

People who can analyze and are able to recognize and solve problems for themselves, save employers time, effort and money.

#### **People who set personal goals**

People who try to be the best in whatever they do makes a lasting impression. Employers know they will continue to learn new skills and look for ways to improve their work.

#### **People who are responsible and reliable**

Employers all say that the most important thing they want from an employee is good attendance. If you're not there, everyone else will have to work harder to get the job done.

#### **People who can work with others**

There really isn't any job where you work completely alone. Getting along and being able to work as a team with others is essential, particularly in a small workplace.

#### **People who are clean, neat and well groomed**

Most employers are concerned about how their employees dress and look. Employers want people who are clean and neat, and who take care with their personal appearance.

## *What You Can Offer*

Everyone has skills — even people who have never held a formal job. And most people have many more work-related skills than they think they do.

As you begin your work search activities, it's important to take a look at the skills you have to offer. If possible, get a friend to help you identify your skills. Or better still, get a group of people together to talk about their skills.

Employers are usually looking for two kinds of skills in potential employees:

### **Personal Skills**

How you do things: your attitude, personality and work habits. These are general skills that can be applied to many different jobs. Examples include:

- being reliable and hard-working
- having a sense of humour
- being creative
- being kind and caring
- communicating well
- solving problems
- organizing yourself and your work
- working well with others

### **Technical Skills**

The specific skills required to perform a particular task, such as:

- driving a car or truck
- operating a cash register
- serving food and drinks
- using a computer
- operating a chain saw
- adjusting a carburetor
- transplanting seedlings
- having a driver's license
- having a Foodsafe certificate

Some of your most valuable skills may be those you take for granted because they come easily to you.

You might discount the fact that you communicate well and that people like listening to your thoughts and ideas, or that you can organize an event, or that you are always on time. But employers will want to know these things about you, as well as information about your education, academic courses and/or certificates.

Your technical skills are the easiest ones to identify. They include things you learned to do at a particular job, at school or on your own. Even hobbies, like building model airplanes or cutting your friends' hair, have given you good, usable technical skills. Your personal skills are sometimes not as easy to identify as your technical skills.

**This list might help you identify your personal skills:**

<b><i>If:</i></b>	<b><i>Then you can say this to an employer or in your Resume:</i></b>
◆ You are straightforward with people and do what you say you will, when you say you will.	◆ I am honest, responsible and reliable.
◆ You can think of 10 different ways of doing everything.	◆ I am creative and have good problem solving skills.
◆ You are tough and can hold your own.	◆ I am determined, direct and assertive.
◆ You care about people and are patient.	◆ I am kind, sensitive and people-oriented.
◆ You play a lot of team sports.	◆ I work well with other people. I am a team player.
◆ You are organized (for example, you just arranged 427 CDs in alphabetical order).	◆ I am orderly and methodical. I have strong organizational skills.
◆ You are able to see two sides to every situation.	◆ I am flexible.
◆ You do not lose your temper, and are good at dealing with difficult situations.	◆ I am a good negotiator. I listen and communicate well. I look for solutions, and I work well under pressure.
◆ You are a trendsetter: everyone copies your hairstyle and clothes.	◆ I am dynamic and confident. I am a selfstarter.
◆ You build, make or sew whatever you like.	◆ I am inventive, good with my hands, and have an eye for detail.

## Preparing Your Job Search Materials

### *Writing a resume*

A resume is an advertisement, a way of selling yourself to an employer.

Here are a few general guidelines to help you get started. You can also find books on resume writing at your local library.

- **Make it short and to the point** — not more than one or two pages.
- **Tailor it to the specific type of job or jobs** you are interested in.
- **List your work experience and education**, beginning with your most recent job or school or training program.
- **Supply references.** Before you send out your resume, ask three or four people who know you well (former employers or teachers, for example) if they would be willing to talk to a possible employer about you and your skills and abilities.
- **Be honest.** Don't exaggerate or lie about your skills or qualifications; most employers check information with your references. But don't be too humble. If you think you're good at something or have some special qualities and skills, say so.
- **Include any volunteer work** you have done, and mention past or present membership in community groups or clubs.
- **Include a current mailing address and a telephone number** where you can be reached during the day.
- **Neatly type (or print, if necessary)** your resume on good-quality, standard businessletter size, plain white or cream paper.
- **Check for errors in spelling, grammar or typing.** These are not acceptable to most employers.
- **Try your resume out on your friends**, family or a local job counselor, before you give or send it to a possible employer.

## *Getting Started*

To get started on your resume, gather together some of the basic facts about your employment and education. For work experience, state what jobs you've held, where and for how long — complete with job titles and job descriptions. For education, state exactly what education you've had, where you took your course or program, and when.

In addition:

1. Identify your job objective.

*For example:*

I want to work in an office.

2. Identify the skills you have acquired through previous schooling, work or life experience. (See **Identifying Your Skills** section, page 8.)

*For example:*

In high school, I learned how to operate a computer quickly and accurately, and I received an award for public speaking. I was never late with assignments. I have recently taken a word processing course.

I worked as a food and drink server in a hotel restaurant. I learned how to greet and be polite to customers, take and remember orders accurately, accept payments and make change efficiently.

I did volunteer office work for a community daycare. I know how to create forms, file papers and direct telephone calls.

At home, I have managed the family finances. I am organized and good with numbers.

3. Select the skills that relate to your job objective.

*For example:*

I have experience dealing with the public. I can type, do word processing and file. I am very organized. I am courteous and polite, reliable, and work well under pressure. I am a hard worker, and can work well with others. I am quick and accurate. My communication skills are good. I have a pleasant telephone manner.

4. Emphasize these skills in your resume and cover letter.

### *Writing a Cover Letter*

If you are planning to mail out your resume, you will need a cover letter to go with it. (A cover letter is not necessary if you are visiting a possible employer in person.)

Your cover letter is the first impression of you an employer will have – make it good. Your local library is a good source for information on writing a cover letter. Here are some general guidelines:

- **Make it short and to the point.** Your cover letter should convince the employer to take the time to read your resume and call you in for an interview.
- **Address it to a specific person** whenever possible. If you don't know the employer's name, try calling the company or store first. If you still can't find out, use a job title instead: 'Dear Manager,' for example, or 'Dear Personnel Supervisor.'
- **Explain why you are sending your resume** to this person. For example, if a current employee suggested you write, mention that person's name in your letter. If you are responding to a newspaper ad, refer to the ad.
- **Highlight your skills and accomplishments**, but do not repeat everything in your resume.
- **Point out how your skills and accomplishments fit the job** you want or are applying for – what makes you a good choice.
- **State that you have enclosed a resume** with further information on your education and work experience.
- **State that you would appreciate an interview** at the employer's convenience, and either give a telephone number where you can be reached, or state when you will be calling the person back to (you hope) arrange a convenient time.
- **Neatly type (or write)** your cover letter on good-quality, standard business-letter size, plain white or cream paper.
- **Check for errors** in spelling, grammar or typing.

### *Completing an Application Form*

Some employers require that you complete an application form even if you have a resume. They find it easier to compare your qualifications to those of other applicants' if everyone has completed the same form.

Here are some tips for completing application forms:

- **Bring a copy of your resume** with you whenever you apply for work. If you are asked to fill out an application form right there in the office, you can simply copy the information without having to rely on your memory.
- **If possible, take the application form home** with you to complete. At home, you can take as much time as you need to fill out the form neatly and correctly. (Ask for two copies of the application, in case you make a mistake on your first try.)
- **Always have a couple of good-quality pens** with you whenever you're job searching, just in case you can't bring the application form home. Your application must be neat and easy to read — you want to create a good first impression.
- **Carefully read the instructions** on the application form. Answer only what is asked. If a question does not apply to you, write a dash (–) or N/A (for 'not applicable') in the blank.
- **Be honest.** You will not get the job you are applying for if you get caught lying.
- **Be specific about the job you are applying for.** Some companies might have a number of job openings. Make sure you can give the exact title of the job you are most interested in.
- **In the 'Work Experience' and 'Education' sections, list your most recent employer/school first** and work back. Remember to list as many job duties as you can to show your range of skills, and any awards you may have received.
- **Fill in the 'Additional Comments' section** if the form has one. This is where you can expand on the bare factual information and let the employer know what special skills and accomplishments you can bring to the job.

## Getting Ready To Meet Employers

### *First meeting tips*

Whether your resume has worked and you've been invited to come in for a formal job interview, you are conducting an informational interview, or you've just decided to knock on doors and take your chances, the first face-to-face meeting with an employer is very important.

#### Be prepared.

Do some research before your interview or visit. Make sure you know exactly what the business does, and what kind of position would suit you.

If you've been asked to interview for a specific job, make sure you know what the job duties and responsibilities are in advance. Begin thinking about how your skills, abilities and interests fit with the job.

Prepare some brief points about how you and your particular skills and abilities would fit in. If you're 'cold calling' (knocking on doors without an appointment) be aware that employers may be too busy to spend much time with you. Prepare and practice a short, one-minute statement that gives your name, the type of position you are looking for and a little about your background. Finish up by saying something like: 'Would you be interested in setting up an interview?'

#### Be neat and well groomed. Be polite, be friendly, and smile.

Personality and appearance do have a bearing on job hiring decisions. If an employer has interviewed two people with just about the same skills, training and experience, the employer will choose the person she or he likes the most.

If you're just walking in off the street, personality and appearance become even more important.

Project the image you want through your clothes, your speech and your manners. Shake hands firmly, look straight at your interviewer and sit or stand up straight. This shows the interviewer you understand that a good image is important and helps to bring in more business.

Answer questions clearly, and stick to the point — but don't be shy. Mention everything about you that you think might help you get the job.

### *Common Interview Questions*

The questions most often asked in formal interviews (and often in informal ones as well, where you've just walked in off the street) include:

- What can you tell me about yourself?
- What do you consider your most important skills or abilities?
- What are your strengths?
- What are your weaknesses?
- Why should we hire you?
- What five words would you say describe you best?
- Have you had any experience in this kind of work?
- What do you know about how this business operates?
- Why do you want to work here?
- What is it about this business or this job that interests you?
- Do you prefer to work by yourself or with others?
- Do you like routine work?
- How well do you work under pressure?
- Why did you leave your last job?
- Have you ever been fired? Why?
- What is your opinion of your last boss?
- Do you plan to get additional training or go back to school?
- Where do you want to be and what do you want to be doing in 10 years?
- Are you looking for permanent or temporary work? Part-time or full-time?
- Are your hours flexible? Are you willing to work overtime, or on weekends?
- What was your favourite subject in school? Why?

## More Information

### *Barriers to Employment*

Do you have barriers to finding work? If so, you are not alone. In the past, a panel of income assistance clients was asked to characterize the types of difficulties they faced in finding work in the current labour market. The following barriers were common responses:

#### **Youth**

- No full-time work
- Lack job experience
- Poor economy
- Lack of skills training
- General lack of education
- No child-care spaces
- No high school

#### **Adults**

- No full-time work
- English language problems
- No relevant jobs
- Lack of job experience
- Lack of skills training
- Prejudice/racism
- Physical disability
- General lack of education

If you have any of these barriers to employment, the provincial government may have programs to assist you.

### *Programs to Assist You*

The provincial government has programs to help people overcome barriers to employment. They include the following:

Employment Standards Branch can provide you with information on your rights as an employee such as basic work conditions, age, pay, overtime, holidays, notice and workers' rights. For more information on employee rights, contact the Employment Standards Branch, Ministry of Labour and Citizens' Services at **1 800 663-3316**, or on the web site at **[www.labour.gov.bc.ca/esb](http://www.labour.gov.bc.ca/esb)**.

Information on the Child Care Subsidy Program can be found by calling **1 866 866-0800** or visit the Ministry of Children and Family Development website at: **[www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/subsidy\\_promo.htm](http://www.mcf.gov.bc.ca/childcare/subsidy_promo.htm)**.

For information on the British Columbia Student Assistance Program, student loans, grants, eligibility, financial assistance levels and applications contact the Student Services Branch of the Ministry of Advanced Education, **604 660-2610** in Vancouver and elsewhere in BC at **1 800 561-1818**. Information can also be found on the web site at **[www.aved.gov.bc.ca/studentervices/](http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/studentervices/)**.

For information on college and university programs, contact your local college or university or see the web site at: **[www.aved.gov.bc.ca/](http://www.aved.gov.bc.ca/)**.

### *Web Sites to Assist You*

The following list of Internet resources contains many sites of interest for those who need information on job search techniques, job opportunities, career planning, or training and education. Each of the sites has many links to other useful sites and resources.

#### **Job Search Information and Job Opportunities**

- **WorkAble Solutions** ([www.workablesolutionsbc.ca/](http://www.workablesolutionsbc.ca/))  
WorkAble Solutions – a unique employment resource for persons with disabilities, employers, and Human Resources professionals in British Columbia (BC).
- **Public Service Commission of Canada** ([www.jobs-emploi.gc.ca](http://www.jobs-emploi.gc.ca))  
This web site provides information on federal public service employment opportunities, and opportunities in international organizations. If you use the Internet at home, the PSC's Career Alert service can notify you about specific jobs that suit your interests and qualifications.
- **HRSDC's Job Bank** ([www.jobbank.gc.ca](http://www.jobbank.gc.ca))  
Use this site to search for work anywhere in Canada. It links you to every job listed in the Human Resources and Skills Development Canada Job Bank, an electronic job information tool. Listings are updated continuously.
- **Youth Resource Network of Canada** ([www.youth.gc.ca/](http://www.youth.gc.ca/))  
This web site helps youth prepare for and find work. Available resources include self-assessment tools, job information, training and education, job search techniques, job opportunities, and self-employment information.

- **JobShark.com** ([www.jobshark.ca/caeng/index.cfm](http://www.jobshark.ca/caeng/index.cfm))  
An on-line career and recruitment centre for job seekers and recruiters.
- **Canadian Association of Career Educators and Employers**  
([www.cacee.com/](http://www.cacee.com/))  
A site established to introduce students to meaningful employment opportunities.
- **Career Owl** ([www.careerowl.ca](http://www.careerowl.ca))  
An on-line recruiting service to help Canadian job seekers search for work.
- **Work Destinations** ([www.workdestinations.org](http://www.workdestinations.org))  
A guide to work and relocation in Canada. You can search the database to match your occupation to a province or territory of choice.

### **Career Planning and Labour Market Information**

- **BC WorkInfoNet** ([www.workinfolnet.bc.ca](http://www.workinfolnet.bc.ca))  
This is a comprehensive labour market and career planning information web site put together by the Labour Market and Career Information Association of BC., a non-profit society with a broad professional membership. Under *Quicklinks* is the BC WIN Youth site which includes a series of databases that provides access to career and labour market information resources both on and off line; educational and job search resources; and a number of communications vehicles for career practitioners.

## Appendix A – Work Search Inventory

This Inventory check list will help ensure that your efforts to find work are as effective as they can be. Use this list of tasks to generate more ideas for follow-up. Be sure to fully document all work search activities. Record your activities on the Work Search Activities Record (HSD77).

Yes	No	
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I know what my skills are.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I know what kind of job I want to look for.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have prepared a resume to give to possible employers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I am ready to knock on doors and follow up any job leads.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have told my friends, family, neighbours, teachers, former employers and co-workers that I am looking for work, asked about their jobs, and whether they know of any job openings.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	To find job information and job leads, I have gone to the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>♦ Human Resources and Skills Development Centres of Canada</li> <li>♦ Community Skills Centre</li> <li>♦ Public Library</li> <li>♦ College/University Library</li> <li>♦ College/University Placement Office</li> <li>♦ Business Information Centre/Chamber of Commerce</li> <li>♦ Volunteer Bureau</li> <li>♦ Local Union Hall</li> <li>♦ Other Community Organizations</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I read the newspaper job ads every day.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have placed a 'job wanted' ad in the local newspaper.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I have put a 'job wanted' poster on bulletin boards around town.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I watch for 'help wanted' ads in local shop windows.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I visit seasonal employers to ask about seasonal jobs.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I use the Internet to find job postings.
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	I respond to every job lead.

## Appendix B – Conduct Informational Interviews with Employers

This worksheet provides you with a series of questions to use for “information interviews” with employers about your particular employment choice. Contact at least three employers to interview for each employment choice. (Make as many copies of this worksheet as you need.)

The “information interview” is an excellent way to research a particular job or career. This is done by speaking directly with a person who does the kind of job that you want more information about. It is preferable to do an information interview in person so that you can see the work environment. The information interview may also provide you with an employer contact for actual employment or a work experience at a later date. Done thoroughly, this step will give you a really clear picture and help you decide if a certain job is what you want.

### Your Employment Choice:

Name of Business:

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Address:

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Telephone Number:

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Contact Person:

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Date Contacted:

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### Ice Breakers:

1. How long have you been in this line of work?

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2. What do you enjoy most about your job?

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3. If you had it to do all over again would you still choose to work in this occupation?  
If yes, why?

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And if not, why?

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**Description of Job/Vocation:**

4. Please describe the tasks that you perform during a normal workday.

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5. Does this occupation have a great deal of travel associated with it?  
(frequent, occasional)

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6. What hours do people generally work in this occupation?  
(shift, 9 to 5, 40 hours a week)

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7. Are people employed in this field required to bring any special equipment to the job?  
(tools, clothing, etc.)

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**Demands of the Job:**

8. What are the physical demands of this occupation? (standing, lifting, climbing etc.)

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9. What are the mental/emotional demands of this occupation?  
(high stress, customers etc.)

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**Qualifications/Training:**

10. What education and/or training is required in order to enter this occupation?  
(degrees, licensing, certification, work experience etc.)

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11. Where would you suggest I get such education and training?

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**Wage and Benefits:**

12. What is the current starting wage or salary range for this occupation?

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**Labour Market Demands:**

13. What sort of demand is there for people working in this occupation and is this likely to change in the future?

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14. Do you think it would be necessary to relocate in order to find employment in this field?

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**Training On-the-Job or Work Experience?**

15. Would it be possible to pursue this career by training on-the-job rather than through formal training at school or an institution?

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16. *If you are interested in this occupation, consider asking the following*). Is there any possibility of doing a volunteer work experience or job shadow for a day or so.

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17. Can you recommend someone else I could interview?

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**Other Comments/Questions:**

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