

## **SESSION FIVE**

# **The Complete Interview and Planning for Setbacks**

## Flip Charts

1.

### AGENDA

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Welcome and Sharing

Interviewing:

Tell Me About Yourself

Closing the Interview

The Complete Interview

Planning for Setbacks

Debrief

Certificates and Closing

4.

### WHAT WAS USEFUL ABOUT PRACTISING THE WHOLE INTERVIEW?

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2.

### WHAT DO YOU SAY OR DO AT THE CLOSE OF AN INTERVIEW?

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5a.

### DIFFICULTIES THAT ARE HINDERING JOBSEARCH

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What key abilities and personality  
traits are needed?

Questions that will show these traits  
and abilities.

traits and abilities.

3.

### CLOSING THE INTERVIEW

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Summarise!

Express enthusiasm about the job!

Find out where you stand!

Find out next steps, express  
appreciation, and leave!

5b.

### WAYS OF OVERCOMING THESE DIFFICULTIES

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6.

WHAT I APPRECIATE ABOUT YOUR  
PARTICIPATION IS...

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WHAT I APPRECIATE ABOUT MY  
PARTICIPATION IS...

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7.

SESSION FIVE DEBRIEF  
WHAT WORKED AND WHAT DIDN'T

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# **HAND-OUTS FOR WORKSHOP ACTIVITIES and ADDITIONAL INFORMATION HAND-OUTS**

## **SESSION FIVE: Hand-outs for Workshop Activities**

5-1 Script: Closing an Interview

5-2 Questions for the Complete Interview

5-3 Let's Help Pat!

5-4 Strategies for Overcoming Setbacks

[3-5 Completed Participant Networking List]

## **SESSION FIVE: Additional Information Hand-outs**

5TIPS Tips for Closing the Interview

5PRE Pre-Interview Checklist

5POST Post-Interview Checklist

5ORGAN Organising Your Search

5OFFERS Job Offers



DIALOGUE	INSTRUCTIONS AND GRAPHICS	HAND-OUTS AND NOTES
<p><b>Controlling the Direction:</b> Please take a few minutes to think about the main points or ideas that you might include in responding to "Tell me about yourself".</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the advice that you gave Pat Brown yesterday.</li> <li>• The employer has the easy job this time. All s/he has to do is say: "Tell me about yourself."</li> <li>• The applicant answers just that question. Remember that we will be practicing a complete interview in a little while so try to keep your focus on "Tell me about yourself."</li> </ul>	<p><b>II. INTERVIEWING: PART II (continued from Session 4) CONTROLLING THE DIRECTION OF THE INTERVIEW</b></p> <p><b>A. Tell Me About Yourself</b></p> <p>A. Present: "This is your opportunity to practice answering this kind of open-ended probe."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Display the Flip-Chart from Session 4: "The main points or ideas that might be included in answering, "Can you tell me about yourself?"</li> <li>• "Lets go through the points again from yesterday's exercise and take a few minutes to think what is relevant to you and what you should say."</li> <li>• "We're now going to do a brief sketch and we want you to note anything that might be relevant for you."</li> <li>• Trainers model a script</li> </ul> <p>B. Practice: Participant groups of 3 practice responding to: "Tell me about yourself."</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applicant.</li> <li>• Employer</li> <li>• Observer</li> </ul> <p>C. Debrief: "How did it feel to be the applicant/employer/observer?"</p> <p>D. "From this exercise, what have you learnt which will help you answer this type of open question in the future."</p>	<p>20-30 Minutes</p> <p>Break into groups of 3</p>

DIALOGUE	INSTRUCTIONS AND GRAPHICS	HAND-OUTS AND NOTES
<p><b>Interviewing:</b> We have one more building block to add to your store of interviewing skills, and this is <u>closing</u> the interview, the final impression you leave with an employer. It can be the most lasting impression so you want to make a good one.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>In a few minutes, you will have a chance to practice the complete interview</li> </ul> <p><b>Express enthusiasm about the job!</b> Show interest and excitement, no matter how you felt the interview went.</p> <p><b>Find out where you stand!</b> Ask the interviewer a direct question and you'll usually get an answer.</p> <p><b>Find out the next steps, express appreciation, and leave!</b> You want to get either a 2<sup>nd</sup> interview or the job! But first let's talk about how interviews end.</p> <p><b>Closing the Interview:</b> Let's look at some suggestions from the experts: <b>Summarise!</b> Positive points in relation to the job opening. Positive statements that put fears to rest about any negative issues. Why you want the job.</p>	<p><b>III. INTERVIEWING: PART III CLOSING THE INTERVIEW AND THE COMPLETE INTERVIEW</b></p> <p><b>A. Closing the Interview</b></p> <p>1. Present and Chart:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"How long does an interview last? What sorts of things tell you that the interview is drawing to an end?"</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="608 1182 1023 1509" data-label="Form"> <p>2.</p> <p>WHAT DO YOU SAY OR DO AT THE CLOSE OF AN INTERVIEW?</p> <hr/> </div> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Post Flip: Closing the Interview</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="616 1659 1015 1971" data-label="Form"> <p>3.</p> <p>CLOSING THE INTERVIEW</p> <hr/> <p>Summarise! Express enthusiasm about the job! Find out where you stand! Find out next steps, express appreciation, and leave!</p> </div>	<p>10-15 Minutes</p>

2. Practice: Trainers role-play how to end an interview.
- E. Well, that's just about all the questions I have. Is there anything more you'd like to ask me?
- A. I'd just like to take the opportunity to restate that my extensive experience in packing different items and my reputation as a reliable employee demonstrate that I'd be an excellent materials handler for Smiths Industries. While we were touring the shipping area and loading dock I could see myself working here and I liked the feel of it. I'm really interested in this job. So I'd like to ask you, do you have any reservations about my background that I could address?
- E. Hmm... all in all I'd say I've been impressed by the way you presented yourself. But I don't know if I'm 100% convinced that you'd stay with the company over the long run.
- A. Then I haven't told you my impression as a company to work for. I feel that Smiths is a growing company with a real future in the industry. To me that means the job offers the things I want most in a career: opportunities and challenges. People I've talked to like it here, too. Altogether that paints a picture of the sort of company I would like to work for. I don't view this as just a job, but see it as an excellent opportunity to progress..
- E. I'm glad to hear you say so.
- A. Will there be another round of interviews after this or will you be deciding right away?
- E. We'll be making our decision in the next few days.
- A. Then I'll look forward to hearing from you soon. Thank you very much for the interview, \_\_\_\_\_, I've enjoyed talking to you.
- E. Me too. (Stands, shakes hand). Thanks for coming in.
- A. Goodbye.

Debrief: "What are your impressions of that closing?"



<p><b>The Complete Interview:</b></p> <p>You have already practiced each part of the interview. Now we are going to put them all together and do a whole interview.</p>	<p><b>B. The Complete Interview</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Present: “You’ve already practiced doing all of the parts of an interview:” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identifying your skills</li> <li>• Concrete examples of your achievements</li> <li>• How to handle possible negative questions</li> <li>• Thinking like an employer to know what to expect in an interview</li> <li>• How to present the main points in responding to open-ended questions</li> <li>• How to effectively close an interview.</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Practice: “Now you’re going to put them together and do a whole interview.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employer</li> <li>• Applicant</li> <li>• Observer”</li> </ul> <p>Distribute Hand-out: “Questions for the Complete Interview”</p> </li> <li>3. Debrief and Post on Flip Chart: “What was useful about this exercise? How did it feel to be the applicant/employer/observer?”</li> </ol> <div data-bbox="539 1256 1091 1695"> <p>4.</p> <p>WHAT WAS USEFUL ABOUT PRACTISING THE WHOLE INTERVIEW?</p> <hr/> </div>	<p>45-60 Minutes</p> <p>Break into groups of 3</p> <p>Hand-out 5-2: “Questions for the complete interview”</p> <p>5-15 minutes</p>
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<p><b>Debrief:</b> Now I'd like each of you to take a few minutes to look over the list of suggestions we've posted and pick some that would work for you personally.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>When you've decided on which things you plan to try, choose your top two and write them down on the form we've just given you. Then we'll go around the room and share how you plan to keep on going and remain motivated in your job search.</li> </ul>	<div data-bbox="395 168 756 439"> <p><b>5a.DIFFICULTIES THAT ARE HINDERING JOBSEARCH</b></p> <p>What key abilities and personality traits are needed?</p> </div> <div data-bbox="858 168 1173 439"> <p>5b. WAYS OF OVERCOMING THESE DIFFICULTIES</p> </div> <p>3. Debrief: "Which ideas/strategies will you use to overcome these obstacles?"</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribute: Hand-out.</li> <li>Trainer encourages participants to vocalise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>To the participant sitting next to them; or</li> <li>To the large group; or</li> <li>To indicate on the flip-chart with a check-mark.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>Their choices for overcoming difficulties.</p>	<p>5-10 Minutes</p> <p>Hand-out 5-4: "Strategies for Overcoming Setbacks".</p>
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DIALOGUE	INSTRUCTIONS AND GRAPHICS	HAND-OUTS AND NOTES
<p><b>Appreciation:</b> You have been in the unique position this week to work closely with each other, to share your stories and strategies, and to get to know each other a little bit.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>It may be helpful for us to hear what characteristics and skills that we have brought to this workshop, because these are the same characteristics that we will bring to our next job.</li> <li>We'd like to give you the chance to show your appreciation and share your insights about each other with a simple exercise.</li> </ul> <p>(Trainers model exercise).</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>V. APPRECIATION EXERCISE</b></p> <p style="text-align: center;"><b>A. Group Appreciation Mingle</b></p> <p>1. Present and Practice: Participants complete the following statements while they mingle around the room:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Distribute Hand-out</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="520 607 1075 1039" data-label="Form"> <p>6.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">WHAT I APPRECIATE ABOUT YOUR PARTICIPATION IS...</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">WHAT I APPRECIATE ABOUT MY PARTICIPATION IS...</p> <hr/> </div> <p>“What you need to do is to look to your colleagues and make a note of what you have appreciated about their participation in the group. So for example, Sally, what I appreciate about your participation is the way you come in with the right words, when I get stuck, or forget to make an important point at the end of an exercise. As you mingle with the group you will remember other points about your colleagues, and just jot them down. Don't forget to jot down a few words about your own participation in the group. Ok, go ahead and mingle for 5-10mins.”</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ask participants to volunteer to read out some examples of what has been written.</li> </ul>	<p style="text-align: center;">15 Minutes</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Feedback: Trainers to ensure that all participants receive/ hear at least two appreciations from colleagues.</p>

DIALOGUE	INSTRUCTIONS AND GRAPHICS	HAND-OUTS AND NOTES
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>VI. CLOSING</b></p> <p><b>A. Debrief</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Present: Review day <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interviewing: Controlling the Direction: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Tell Me About Yourself</li> <li>○ Closing the Interview</li> <li>○ The Complete Interview</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Planning for Setbacks</li> <li>• Appreciation Exercise</li> </ul> </li> <li>2. Practice and Post on Flip Chart: Participants give feedback on what did and what didn't work in Session 5. <div data-bbox="539 913 1050 1223" data-label="Form" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>7.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">SESSION FIVE DEBRIEF</p> <hr/> <p style="text-align: center;">WHAT WORKED AND WHAT DIDN'T</p> </div> </li> <li>3. Debrief: "What was effective? What was not as effective?"</li> </ol>	<p>5-15 Minutes</p>

	<p><b>B. Follow-up Contact</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trainers encourage participants to call them for referral purposes, for other information, or to give an update on their progress.</li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>[Facilitators' first and last name]</p> <p>[Facilitators' office phone number]</p> <p>[Facilitators' office address]</p> </div>	2 Minutes
<p><b>Certificates and Farewell:</b></p> <p>You have been a great group to work with. You all worked hard and did a great job at learning these important skills in sharing your own strategies and life experiences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You also showed how <u>resourceful</u> and <u>competent</u> you are, both at helping yourselves and at helping each other. You all had a lot to offer each other and you will continue to have a lot to offer throughout your lives.</li> <li>When I call your name will you please come up and get your certificate?</li> <li>Congratulations, best of luck to you, and please let us know how your progress goes!</li> </ul>	<p><b>C. Certificates and Farewell</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trainers make a ceremony out of giving certificates. Stand, initiate applause after each member gets a certificate and shake that person's hand.</li> <li>When ceremony is over, express your appreciation for the group, wish them well and thank them for participating.</li> </ul>	10-15 Minutes

## **SESSION FIVE – Hand-outs**

# Closing an Interview

E: Employer  
A: Applicant

- E** Well, that's just about all the questions I have. Is there anything more you'd like to ask me?
- A** I'd just like to take the opportunity to restate that my extensive experience in packing different items and my reputation as a reliable employee demonstrate that I'd be an excellent materials handler for Smiths Industries. While we were touring the shipping area and loading dock I could see myself working here and I liked the feel of it. I'm really interested in this job. So I'd like to ask you, do you have any reservations about my background that I could address?
- E** Hmm... all in all I'd say I've been impressed by the way you presented yourself. But I don't know if I'm 100% convinced that you'd stay with the company over the long run.
- A** Then I haven't told you my impression as a company to work for. I feel that Smiths is a growing company with a real future in the industry. To me that means the job offers the things I want most in a career: opportunities and challenges. People I've talked to like it here, too. Altogether that paints a picture of the sort of company I would like to work for. I don't view this as just a job. For me, this is a serious career move.
- E** I'm glad to hear you say so.
- A** Will there be another round of interviews after this or will you be deciding right away?
- E** We'll be making our decision in the next few days.
- A** Then I'll look forward to hearing from you soon. Thank you very much for the interview, \_\_\_\_\_, I've enjoyed talking to you.
- E** Me too. (Stands, shakes hand). Thanks for coming in.
- A** Goodbye.



# Questions for the Complete Interview

**Interviewer:**

- Find out for which job the applicant is interviewing.
- Choose from the following list of questions to conduct your interview.

**Job:**

**1**

Tell me a bit about yourself.

**2**

What type of job are you looking for and why at this company?

**3**

Why did you leave your last job?

**4**

What is your greatest strength?

**5**

What is your greatest weakness?

**6**

How does your past experience relate to this job?

**7**

What sort of salary do you expect?

**8**

What are your long-term goals?

**9**

Why should we hire you?

**10**

Is there anything else you'd like me to know?

# Let's Help Pat

Pat found that she was really energetic the first few days after the workshop. She made a list of people in her personal network and began to make calls. Her good friends gave her the name of a florist and she conducted an informational interview.

By the following week she'd really lost energy and just wanted to sleep. She set her alarm for 8.30am and planned to call job leads from 9am to 12pm, but when the alarm rang, she turned it off and went back to sleep. When she finally woke up at 11.30 she felt really bad about blowing her schedule. Somehow the whole day went by and she hadn't done a single thing toward her job search. She watched a lot of TV and played Candy Crush.

One day turned into a week. Each day she felt worse about her lack of progress, but she couldn't get herself to keep up her job search. She thought about what she should be doing but didn't do it. She started doing more of the household tasks instead of looking for a job.

She had no idea how to handle this, because she had never been in a situation like this before. She had always been very motivated and energetic. Her last employer had told her that she was one of the hardest workers she had ever seen.

**What do you think got in Pat's way?**

**What would you suggest that Pat do to help her continue her job search?**

# Strategies for Overcoming Setbacks

In his book, *Guerrilla Tactics in the Job Market*, the author, Tom Jackson describes the typical job search as:



The job search strategies that you have learned in this workshop will help you eliminate many of the NOs, but there will still be some. Setbacks and encouragement are a normal part of the job search. The good news is that we all have strategies that can help us overcome setbacks and take action.

**Make a list of the strategies that work best for you or new ones that you would like to try.**

**H/O 3- 5 [Completed Participant Networking List distributed to group]**

## **Session Five – Additional Information Hand-outs**

# Tips for Closing the Job Interview

Respect the interviewer's time. Most interviews last between 20 minutes and 60 minutes. Watch for signs that the interviewer is getting ready to end the interview.

When you don't have any more questions for the interviewer ask, *"is there any other information you need from me?"* If the interviewer has no more questions, take the opportunity to summarise. This will allow you to close the interview on a positive note.

## Summarise

1. Summarise your positive points in relation to the job opening. Note what the important qualities are from such a job and highlight that you have them.
2. Summarise any negatives you think may be an issue by turning them into positives (see *Turning Negatives into Positives*).
3. Summarise the pluses about the organisation or the company. For example, *"this company has all the things I've been looking for: challenge, problem solving opportunities..."* add your own ideas.

## Express enthusiasm

In the summary, express interest and excitement, no matter how you felt the interview went. For example, *"I have a good feeling about this job and know that it fits me very well."*

## Find out where you stand

A direct question gives you one last chance to turn any negatives into positives. For example:

1. *"Do you have any reservations about my qualifications that I can address?"*
2. *"As indicated, I feel very good about this. Will there be a second interview or will the decision be made after this?"*
3. *"I'm sure I will have more questions. When would be the best time for me to get back to you?"*

## Salary

Don't discuss salary unless it is raised by the interviewer. If you get a job offer, then discuss salary. If you want to learn the salary ranges, do some research before the interview.

## Express appreciation

Thank the interviewer and say that you enjoyed talking with him or her. Express your appreciation to any other people you met besides the interviewer. The interviewer may well ask their impression of your attitude and personality.

Send a follow-up letter or e-mail thanking the employer for an enjoyable interview and reaffirming your interest in the job.

# Pre-Interview Checklist

- ☐ Research the company as much as possible. Try to know about:
  - The company
  - The job
  - The interviewer
  - The salary range
  - The type of work for which you are interviewing
- ☐ Prepare a response to “Tell Me About Yourself”.
- ☐ Prepare answers to commonly asked interview questions and difficult questions.
- ☐ Practice concrete examples to support the skills that match the job requirements.
- ☐ Practice interviewing with family, friends, mirror etc.
- ☐ Dress appropriately for the interview.
- ☐ Take a notebook, pen, copies of your CV, work samples, list of references with you.
- ☐ Know the name of the person conducting the interview.
- ☐ Get good directions.
- ☐ Know how long it will take to get there.
- ☐ Plan your journey so that you arrive with time to spare. Plan to arrive at the site 20 minutes before the interview to allow for traffic and other delays. Arrive at the exact location of the interview 10 minutes before the interview is due to begin.
- ☐ Give yourself a pep-talk.
- ☐ Imagine a successful interview.
- ☐ Relax and breathe.

# Post Interview Checklist

Company or Business:

Name & Title of Interviewer:

Position interviewed for:

Date of interview:

**Check each item that you remembered to do during the interview. Put a star next to those items that you want to work on improving for the next interview.**

☐

Arrived on time.

☐

Dressed neatly and appropriately.

☐

Made sure I had fresh breath before the interview.

☐

I was friendly to everyone at the workplace.

☐

Greeted the interviewer by name.

☐

Had a firm handshake.

☐

Maintained eye contact.

☐

Had good posture.

☐

Had a positive attitude.

☐

Described my skills using concrete examples.

Closed the interview by:

☐

Summarising how my skills could benefit the employer.

☐

Asking if the employer had any concerns about hiring me.

☐

Determining next steps

☐

Thanking the interviewer and expressing enthusiasm about working there.



# Follow Up Plan

☐

Write next steps and date to follow up.

☐

Send interviewer an up-beat thank you letter/e-mail, thanking him/her for the interview and restating my interest in the job.

☐

List what I did well in the interview and what I would like to repeat:

☐

Questions I thought I answered well:

☐

Other areas I would like to improve:

# Organising Your Job Search

## Congratulations!

After completing this workshop you know much more about finding a job than most people who are looking for work. The following suggestions can help you turn what you *know* into productive *action*, and help your job search go more smoothly.

## Preparation, Preparation, Preparation

Job searching can be a challenge, especially if you are completing a large number of applications and sending out CVs to a range of companies. The key to managing your job search is to be super organised, which isn't nearly as time consuming as it sounds. Here are a number of tips and tricks that you might want to try to ensure a smooth, less daunting job search process.

### A professional sounding e-mail address

Set up a separate e-mail address, solely for your job search so that you can stay organised. The first impression you give an employer is the most important one, so make sure to pick an appropriate e-mail address; johnsmith@hotmail.com is more likely to be taken seriously by employers than jonnyboyxxx@hotmail.com.

### Up to date, editable materials

Make sure that you always have up to date copies of your covering letter and CV to hand and ready to send. Also make sure that these are saved in editable formats like Word so that you can edit their content to match the job that you are applying for.

### Prepare your references

Keep a handy list of two or three reliable references ready which includes their name, job title, company and phone number. Having this information up to date and readily to hand makes you look organised and prepared when potential employers request it.

### Gather your files in one place

Most commonly requested materials include CVs, covering letters and references. Organise them in a folder that is easily accessible on your computer. To be even more effective, you could use a free cloud storage service like Dropbox or Google Drive. These services offer online storage which lets you access your files across multiple devices (like computers, tablets, mobile phones, for example).

## Contact organiser

It's important to keep track of what jobs you've applied for, where you've sent your CV, who you have networked with, and when you need to follow up on leads.

Keep a note of:

- the materials you sent (for example, which versions of your covering letter and CV you sent, or which application forms);
- who you sent them to;
- the position you applied for;
- the date sent; and
- the date you need to follow up.

Set up a file or directory on your computer to keep copies of all the covering letters, CVs and application forms you send. You can also set up a folder in your email box so you can track the emails you send employers and the responses you receive.

Use an appointment book, notebook, or online organiser to keep track of interviews, as well as follow-up e-mails and phone calls you need to make. There are lots of free apps available which can be used to keep track.

## Schedule Your Time

It can be easy to get side tracked with other activities. It's important to establish a job search schedule and stick to it. Schedule your time much in the same way you would a job. This will ensure that when you do start work, you are used to following a work pattern.

Finding the best routine will be useful. If you are more productive in the morning, then use this time for more challenging tasks. The mornings are also a good time to make follow-up calls or send e-mails to the companies you're targeting. Similarly, if you are an evening person make the most of this time by filling out on-line applications.

### A sample time-table

7.30-8.30	Wake up, shower, dress, and eat breakfast.
8.30-9.00	Check e-mails and organise 'To Do' list for the day.
9.00-9.30	Make follow-up calls and send follow-up e-mails.
09.30 -10.30	Check Job Alerts and vacancy websites.
10.30 – 10.45	Take a break.
10.45 – 12.30	Covering letter and CV development.
12.30 – 13.30	Lunch
13.30 – 15.30	Complete application forms
15.30 – 15.45	Take a break
15.45 – 17.00	Practice interview techniques and answers.

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### Pace yourself and set realistic goals

Decide how many hours each day you will spend on your job search, and have a target goal in mind about how many jobs you aim to apply for each day. However, it can be easy to become overwhelmed when job searching so it is also important to remember to take some down-time. Taking regular breaks, or the evening off to unwind will give you some time out to relax so that you are refreshed and energised for the following day's job search.

# Tips for Handling Job Offers

## Congratulations you have a job offer!

**If it's a good offer and you like everything you hear, then you can accept when you are offered the job.**

Make sure you know and are in agreement with the details on the offer. Details like:

- Job title and duties
- Hours of employment
- Benefits
- Holiday entitlement
- Pension
- Starting date
- Salary
- Health insurance
- Sickness absence policy
- Health declaration
- Health and substance screening
- And anything else you feel is important to know

Write an acceptance letter or e-mail that expresses your delight with the offer, the date you will start, and any other necessary information.

### **If you are not ready to accept the offer**

Ask for a reasonable amount of time to consider the offer. You may not be satisfied with the offer, you may have another offer to consider or you may be waiting for another job offer. Call back on or before the agreed upon date.

### **If you are interested in the position, but the offer is not what you hoped for**

Express your pleasure with the offer and tell the employer you would like to meet with him/her before making a final decision. In the meantime, consider the offer and what would need to change to make it a more attractive offer.

### **If you are not interested in the position**

Tell the employer and follow up with a friendly rejection letter or e-mail thanking the employer for his/her interest in your candidacy.

# Overcoming Perceived Challenges

## Example: Applying for a management position in a restaurant

### An erratic job history

"I bring a variety of experiences and responsibilities to the job."

"I know now what I really want to do. I have a strong desire to work in the restaurant business and be successful as a manager."

### A career change

"A challenge which I welcome and would thrive on."

"I have long had the desire to be a manager and I often took on managerial responsibilities in the service station, such as scheduling duties and helping resolve conflicts among employees."

### A gap in work history

"A time of personal development and study; I am now certain of my career path and plan on working very hard to reach my goals."

"A time of updating my computer skills, which makes me a more valuable employee."

### Too old

"I bring stability, dependability and energy to this position. At my last job I missed only 5 days of work due to illness in the past 7 years."

"I bring an exceptional ability to learn new things quickly and easily. One of my hobbies is dancing and I love keeping up with new dance steps."

### Too young

"I bring my enthusiasm, my desire to learn new things, and my ability to learn quickly to any job. My last employer said I learned to update price lists faster than anyone he'd ever seen."

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## **Returning to work after years as a raising children or caring for a family member**

“My years raising my children / caring for my relative have prepared me well for this position. I bring exceptional organisational skills, an ability to focus on many tasks at once, and the ability to help people resolve conflict. I’ve managed the annual school fair for the past 5 years, and managed the kitchen staff at a children’s’ summer club for 4 weeks each summer for the past 15 years.