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10 Essentials to Get That Job! An Employment Guide for Persons with Disabilities, reflects the input of many people. Representatives of agencies, employer organizations and consumers provided us with valuable comments and advice during the writing process. Like a job search, this publication has undergone a journey of its own. The guidebook was the inspiration of Gloria Hughes in Peel, Halton, Dufferin HRDC and first focused on youth. Marianne Malinowski, from the same region enthusiastically adapted the information for persons with disabilities. The guidebook traveled further on its path when a need was identified for the City of Toronto. This version is sponsored by the Ontario Region of HRDC and will ensure that the guidebook becomes accessible to a greater number of persons with disabilities.

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A word from the authors to our readers...

74% of adults with a disability are unemployed or under-employed. Thus, securing employment isn't just about getting a job. It's about matching abilities with opportunities, it's about finding a flexible employer and it's about having the latest information and assistance to compete in a slowly changing work environment.

As employment specialists, we are dedicated to providing you with as much information as possible to make your search successful. We invite you to use this guidebook or the corresponding web site, CD and audiocassette as a resource, a reference or as a means of creating your personal employment plan. Enjoy!

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Introduction

Getting a job you enjoy is difficult at the best of times. Being a job seeker who is also disabled, adds an extra dimension to the process.

There are several issues that make it more challenging for you. For example, confidence in yourself, perceptions employers may have and the need to compensate for your limitations.

These issues and everything that is involved in completing a successful job search may make the process seem like a maze. There are many options but you may be unsure about which route to take.

We have provided a guidebook that includes directions to get and keep the job you want. We call these directions - essentials.

There are 10 essentials, which contain information necessary to secure employment. Each one describes what you need, how to get it and what to do with it. Join us as we guide you through the maze into the world of meaningful employment.

Good luck!

1st Essential: Job Market Information

Only about 25% of working age, disabled Canadians are employed. What does it mean to be disabled? A disability is traditionally defined as any lasting impairment or some important life activity. Apply this to a job search and you've got a major challenge.

However, this challenge can be divided into two components: the inside challenge, which is how you view your abilities, and the outside challenge, which is how you deal with fear, ignorance and possible discrimination toward you.

Several tasks lie ahead of you. One of them will be to educate potential employers and fellow employees so that they see you for your abilities. You will want to find and keep work that suits you and allows you to thrive. You will want to become employable for who and what you are.

The good news is that at any one time there are thousands of employment opportunities available. To find the ones that are the most satisfying for you, first answer the following four critical questions:

- What Jobs are in Demand?
- How Can I Reach Them?
- What Skills do I Need for These Jobs?
- How Can I Convince My Employer that I'm a Good Investment

What Jobs are in Demand?

Because today's job market is changing, there are new opportunities for job seekers. Here are 5 areas to consider:

- The private sector offers the greatest number of jobs. Look here **first**.
- Service industries employ the largest proportion of Ontarians.
- The current job market is largely "non-standard", which means just about anything goes from part-time, temporary or contract jobs.
- The largest occupational group consists of professional and/or technical jobs.
- One in every ten workers is self-employed. Try hiring yourself!

How Can You Find the Jobs?

Start by visiting a Human Resource Centre to gather information about the labour market. Ask for someone to assist you with information containing both global indicators and local trends and jobs. If a visit presents a challenge for you and you are on line, then the HRDC web site will supply you with necessary information.

Are you aware that many companies make it a policy to hire persons with disabilities? Find out who they are and make sure you include them in your search.

What Skills do You Need?

Employment growth is becoming concentrated between high and low-skilled occupations.

Jobs demanding higher skills require special training and include positions in technology, real estate and business services.

Jobs demanding less specialized training include areas such as retail, hospitality, and some manufacturing positions.

Today, being computer literate is almost as critical as being skilled in reading, writing, and numeracy.

How do You Convince an Employer to Hire You?

First you need to work on dispelling the myths some employers may share. Here are three common ones:

Myth #1: Employees with disabilities are not as productive as employees without disabilities.

Fact: Studies have shown that 90% were rated as average or above average in performance of job duties.

Myth #2: People with disabilities are "different".

Fact: People with disabilities are unique individuals as are people without disabilities. They are no more "different" than anyone else.

Myth #3: People with disabilities will take more time off from work because of their disability.

Fact: People with disabilities work just as hard and take less time off than their fellow employees.

Where do you fit in the mix?

With improved access to workplaces, more enlightened employers and better assistive devices, Canadian job seekers who are disabled are finding themselves open to the largest range of employment opportunities thus far.

Your keys to unlock job market information

- Look in local papers to see what jobs are advertised most frequently. This will give you an indication of your local situation.
- Visit the libraries, Human Resource Centres and the Internet for a more complete approach.
- Let everyone know you are looking for work and would appreciate their help.
- Be in contact with your local association connected with your disability.
- Suscribe to "speciality" newsletters containing information specific to persons with disabilities

What do you do now?

- Take action by following through on some keys to unlock the job market.
- Review the job market information.
- Determine which direction you want to take.

The 1st Essential is ...

Relevant data about the job market you are entering.

2nd Essential: Strategies to Get a Job

About 16% or over 4 million Canadians report some level of disability. Therefore, it's a good idea to come up with a strategy to get the right job that fits with your talents and interests. In other words, if you have a plan to get what you want, and know when you want it, you will dramatically increase your chances of success.

Successful people have a strategy in order to achieve the goals that they set for themselves.

What does a good strategy look like?

First, start by defining what success means for you. If you don't do this, you won't know when to celebrate!

To define success, you need to be very clear about what you want. This means setting goals.

To be effective, goals need to be **SMART**

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Realistic
Timely

A short term goal can get you a job. However, one, three and five-year goals will be required to attain a successful career. Before you write down your employment goals, make sure you take into consideration your skills, qualifications, contacts, interests and any barriers you think you face.

Every Strategy Needs a Plan of Action!

A short term goal can get you a job. However, one, three and five-year goals will be required to attain a successful career. Before you write down your employment goals, make sure you take into consideration your skills, qualifications, contacts, interests and any barriers you think you face.

Action Plan

- 1) Employment Goal - Set one!
- 2) Tasks - Make a list of everything needed to accomplish your goal.
- 3) Now get busy- put your plan to work

Evaluate your plan for effectiveness. At the end of each day, week or month, check to see what worked and what still needs to be done.

Remember, the purpose of an action plan is to find a manageable way to achieve your short and long-term goals.

Your keys to Successful Job Strategies

- Be specific about what employment you want and what your conditions are.
- Set your goals, make them SMART
- Explore all options that are feasible for you.
- Focus on your abilities and be realistic about your limitations.

What Do You Do Now?

- Start today!
- Be prepared to re-visit your list frequently, making adjustments as necessary
- Broadcast your intent to anyone who will listen.
- Follow up, follow up, follow up.

The 2nd Essential is ...

A strategy that includes a detailed Action Plan

3rd Essential: Skills and Strengths That Match a Job

First and foremost, employers look for versatility and a good fit between your skills and the skills required for the job. They then take into account other variables such as physical, mental or emotional issues.

Therefore, knowing your skills and your strengths is an important part of the job search process, especially if you have a disability.

What's involved in a skills assessment?

A skills assessment will answer the following questions:

- 1) What are your skills and strengths?
- 2) What does your chosen career require?
- 3) What skills do you still need?

Review the Skills Assessment to determine how you fit with your career choice. Is there a gap in what you know and what you need? If so you can:

- re-think your career
- get more training
- get more experience

What are employers really looking for?

Besides the skills required for a specific career, employers need to be convinced that you have the attitude and behaviours to make a valuable contribution to their company.

The Conference Board of Canada studied the Canadian work force to determine what employers are **really** looking for. From this information they created an Employability Skills Profile which identified several critical skills you'll need when looking for a job.

Employability Skills Profile

Academic Skills	Management Skills	Teamwork Skills
<p>Those skills that provide the basic foundation to get, keep, and progress in a job. You must be able to:</p>	<p>The combination of skills, attitudes, and behaviours required to get, keep and progress in a job. You must demonstrate:</p>	<p>Those skills needed to work with others in a job. You must be able to:</p>
<p>Communicate: Understand and speak the languages in which business is conducted. Listen to understand and learn. Read, comprehend, and use written materials, including graphs, charts, and displays. Write effectively in the languages in which business is conducted. Think: Think critically and act logically to evaluate situations, solve problems and make decisions. Understand and solve problems involving mathematics and use the results. Use technology, instruments, tools, and information systems effectively. Access and apply specialized knowledge from various fields (e.g., skilled trades, technology, physical sciences, arts, and social sciences) Learn: Continue to learn for life.</p>	<p>Positive Attitudes and Behaviours: Self-esteem and confidence. Honesty, integrity, and personal ethics. A positive attitude toward learning, growth, and personal health. Initiative, energy, and persistence to get the job done. Responsibility: The ability to set goals and priorities in work and personal life. The ability to plan and manage time, money, and other resources to achieve goals. Accountability for actions taken. Adaptability: A positive attitude toward change Recognition of and respect for people's diversity and individual differences. The ability to identify and suggest new ideas to get the job done - creativity.</p>	<p>Work with Others: Understand and contribute to the organization's goal. Understand and work within the culture of the group. Plan and make decisions with others and support outcomes. Respect the thoughts and opinions of others in the group. Exercise "give and take" to achieve group results. Seek a team approach as appropriate. Lead when appropriate, mobilizing the group for high performance.</p>

Your Keys to Assessing Individual Skills and Strengths

- Employers look for communication, thinking, and learning skills.
- Employers require positive attitudes and behaviours.
- Employers emphasize the ability to work with others.
- Employers look for traits where you might excel or be different.

What Do You Know?

- Find out what skills and strengths are required for your chosen career.
- Determine where you fit.
- Identify any skills that require improvement.

The 3rd Essential is ...

An assessment of your skills and strengths.

4th Essential: A Résumé That Sells

Your résumé is an opportunity to make the most of your **abilities**. Think of your résumé as a 1 or 2 page marketing tool that promotes you!

You only have a few seconds for the reader to evaluate your accomplishments, experiences, education, and interests. You'll get invited to an interview if your résumé shows how you fit into an employer's picture.

Which résumé format is best?

Whatever format you choose, keep in mind that the purpose is to promote your product - YOU!

Different formats work better for different jobs and for different people. Here are three commonly used formats:

- **A Chronological Résumé** lists your background starting with the most recent information first. Use it for traditional jobs requiring a specific skill or when you have lots of work experience.
- **A Functional Résumé** is composed of skills, work experiences, and strengths as they relate to the position you are applying for. Emphasis is placed on what you have or can do rather than when you achieved it. Use it if you have little or no experience but lots of skills.
- **A Combination Résumé** is a more creative approach to selling yourself. It highlights both your skills and accomplishments and also any relevant work experience. Use it if you have lots of work experience and many transferable skills.

Sample Combination Résumé

Bonnie Keen
75 Irwin Drive
Oakville, Ontario M5T 1M6
(416) 111-1234
e-mail; BK@netlink.com

Professional Strengths

- Teaching, training and instruction experience
- Innovative and enthusiastic
- Proven problem-solver
- Excellent communication skills and organizational skills

Education

1998 Bachelor of Education, Senior - Science
University of Toronto, Faculty of Education
1995 Bachelor of Science (Honours) University of Toronto

Additional Qualifications

1998 Special Education Program (Part 1)

Professional Experience **Classroom Teaching**

- Designed and instructed a variety of subjects for senior grades using co-operative learning principals
- Evaluated and assessed individual students using recognized procedures
- Developed interesting, innovative activities for students of various abilities
- Motivated and encouraged students to become self-directing in their learning

Related Employment

Science Instructor, Science Today Program
(6 month contract)

Affiliations

Member Environmental Protection Committee, GTA
Participated - Information Technology Project
Science Network Community Group

Skills

- Proficient with Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint
- Familiar with Internet and Web Page Design
- Qualified in First Aid CPR

Interests

Environmental Protection Reading

Note: Your résumé is not a review of your life and all you have done. Instead, it highlights the value you bring to an organization.

- 1) If you are uncertain as to which format works best for you, follow the outline for the combination résumé.
- 2) It is essential that you be specific on your résumé.
- 3) Describe what you did at a previous job rather than your job title.
- 4) Even if you have no previous experience, you still possess skills that are in demand.

Try to make your résumé a reflection of what employers are really looking for.

Demonstrate how you think ...

You Are:

- ✓ In contact with your friends and often organize social outings or group events

For Your Résumé:

- ✓ Excellent communication
- ✓ Effective at networking
- ✓ Good organizational skills

Describe how you act ...

You Are:

- ✓ Careful with money, making your income stretch to meet your many expenses

For Your Résumé:

- ✓ Excellent budgeting skills
- ✓ The ability to be resourceful

Show how you work with others ...

You Are:

- ✓ An active member of an organization, committee or club

For Your Résumé:

- ✓ Enjoy being a member of a team
- ✓ Challenged by new situations

Typical Résumé

Headings

Contents

Identification

Your name, address, contact numbers and e-mail

Highlights of Qualifications

- Years of experience
- Top Skills
- Personal Attributes
- Company name and location

Relevant Experience

- Years worked
- Title and/or skills
- Last level of education

Education and Training

- Relevant courses, workshops, and seminars
- Achievements/awards

Interests and Volunteer Work

- Special Interest
- Committees
- Projects
- "Available Upon Request"

References

Action words should also be included in a résumé. These consist of descriptive words that add **power** to your message.

Action Words

A-D

accomplished
achieved
acquired
acted
adapted
administered
advised
advocated
aided
analyzed
anticipated
applied
appointed
appraised
arbitrated
arranged
assessed
assigned
assisted
attained

audited
authored
authorized
balanced
briefed
calculated
cared for
catalogued
categorized
chaired
clarified
coached
collaborated
collected
communicated
compiled
composed
computed
conceptualized
conducted

consolidated
constructed
consulted
contributed
controlled
co-ordinated
corresponded
created
critiqued
customized
decided
delegated
demonstrated
designed
determined
developed
devised
dispatched
distributed
drafted

E-P

edited
enabled
encouraged
engineered
established
evaluated
examined
expanded
expedited
explained
extracted
facilitated
familiarized
financed
forecasted
formulated
founded
generated
guided
handled

Identified
Illustrated
Implemented
Improved
Incorporated
Increased
Influenced
Informed
Initiated
Inspected
Installed
Instituted
Instructed
Integrated
Interacted
Interpreted
Invented
Investigated
Located
maintained

moderated
monitored
motivated
negotiated
operated
organized
originated
participated
performed
persuaded
pioneered
planned
prepared
prevailed
printed
prioritized
programmed
projected
promoted
publicized
purchased

R-Z

recorded	Revitalized	surveyed
recommended	Scheduled	synthesized
recruited	Searched	taught
rectified	Selected	tested
referred	Shaped	transformed
regulated	Simplified	translated
rehabilitated	Solved	tutored
remodeled	Specified	united
reorganized	Stimulated	updated
reported	Succeeded	upgraded
researched	Summarized	validated
restored	Supervised	verified
revised	Supported	volunteered
reviewed		

What about References?

References are extremely important and help an employer make the final hiring decisions. So choose them with care!

Here are a few tips about references:

- Get their permission first.
- Don't use friends or family.
- Put them on a page separate from your résumé.
- State the name, address, telephone number, and your association with the individual.
- Only submit them when asked by a potential employer.
- If you have a letter of reference, you may want to submit it with your résumé.

Your keys to a successful résumé

- Keep it short; design for skimmers NOT readers
- Correct spelling and grammar are a MUST.
- Make it attractive and professional in appearance
- Avoid jargon or slang.

What do you do now?

- Never leave home without a few extra résumés.
- Contact at least 3 people every day.
- Continually update your résumé.

The 4th Essential is ...

A résumé that sets you apart from the crowd.

5th Essential: A Dynamic Cover Letter

A cover letter accompanies your résumé and gives it a personal touch. It provides a brief outline of your professional and personal attributes as they relate to the position you are applying for. Ideally, it will catch the interest of the employer enough to read your résumé.

A Typical Cover Letter

Your Address	Street, city, postal code
Today's Date	Month, day, year
Addressee	Name, title, address
Salutation	ie: Dear Mr. Paul O'Toole:
1 st Paragraph	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State why you are writing • Identify the position you are applying for • Provide a general comment about the company
2 nd Paragraph	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • State academic qualifications if required • Highlight experience that is relevant of the job
3 rd Paragraph	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Match your skills with those required for the position • Provide the reader with reasons for hiring you
4 th Paragraph	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Request action • Indicate that you will follow up - and do it!!
Closing	ie: Sincerely or Yours Truly your name

Example Cover Letter

Bonnie Keen
75 Irwin Dr.
Oakville, Ontario. M5T 1M6
(416) 111-1234
E-mail BK@netlink.com

Current Date

Superintendent of Personnel
Toronto District School Board
2 Teacher's Circle
Toronto, Ontario 2L1 E3R

Dear Mr. Learn:

Please accept the enclosed résumé for a teaching position with the Toronto District School Board. With my strong academic background in Science and my teaching experience with students of various abilities, I would make an immediate contribution to you students' educational experience.

My Bachelor of Education (Senior Level) degree, supported by solid experience gained as an instructor with the Science Today Program, would benefit your science students. I have continually tried to link the students' world to the classroom.

I consider myself to be a committed individual with strong written and oral communication skills. An enthusiastic and innovative approach allows me to undertake any task assigned efficiently. I am able to focus not only immediate tasks but also to contribute to both short and long-term outcomes. I recognize that an excellent teacher is one who not only has the ability to teach, but to learn.

I look forward to an opportunity to meet with you to discuss my teaching philosophy and benefits I can provide to Toronto District School Board. I will follow up with you in the next week.

Yours in Education,

B. Keen
encl.

Your keys to a successful cover letter

- Determine the exact name and title of the person responsible for the hire or address it to "Human Resources".
- Choose phrases and words that demonstrate your capacity to perform the job as advertised - often found in the ad itself.
- Read, read, and re-read for any punctuation, grammar or spelling mistakes.
- Remember to sign it!

What do you do now?

- Develop a cover letter for each specific position you are applying for.
- Ensure your cover letter both supports and enhances your résumé.
- Design a generic cover letter specifically for unplanned employment opportunities (cold calls).

**The 5th Essential is ...
An impressive cover letter**

6th Essential: A Successful Interview

Congratulations if you have been invited to an interview! Reaching this stage means an opportunity to personally present your skills to an employer and to show how you can bring value to their organization. Make the most of it!

This is a time when you and an employer come face to face **with** each other and can make personal and professional judgements **about** each other. Since many people with disabilities go through the interview process successfully, it is important to learn what they do and how they do it.

How can you stand out from the competition?

Because you have a disability, you face tougher competition for each job. One way to stand out is to have a clear idea of what you can do to create value for the organization.

Demonstrate how you can get new customers, keep existing customers or help the business run more profitably. These are benefits to any employer and will set you apart from other applicants.

Sometimes employers don't hire people with disabilities because they are afraid of what it involves and they don't know how to ask.

Your first task is to figure out how to alleviate this fear. Go prepared to address four basic questions:

1) **What can you do?**

These are your abilities as they relate to the requirements of the position. Don't forget to add other attributes that reflect on you as a person.

2) **What can't you do?**

If you are limited seriously in any way, be up front and make sure you state what these limitations are.

3) **How can you overcome what you have difficulty doing?**

Remember to include the things you do that compensate for things you can't do. For example, if you are deaf describe how you are adept at lip reading or use a Hearing Ear Dog, the TTY or Bell Canada Relay Service.

4) **What are the benefits in hiring a person with a disability?**

Talk about statistics that favour the hiring of disabled workers, the financial incentives and other reasons like your personal attitude toward work.

Your second task is to commit to some solid **preparation**. The following tips will assist you;

- Be aware of the goals, mission statement and concerns of the organization. This will give you an idea of how you can help achieve their goals.
- Ask for a job description to gain an understanding of the skills and responsibilities required. This will help you identify ways you can provide a good fit for the position.
- Review the key elements of the advertisement so you can be ready to promote your strengths

How do you get an employer to ask you the tough questions?

The "tough questions" are the ones pertaining to hiring a person with a disability. They are the ones all employees want to ask, but often don't. It is important to get these on the table, so you have a chance to address them. Here are some examples:

Q: What if I hire a person with a disability but there is a problem about adapting the workplace or job to their limitations?

A: "I am confident that I can do the job and if there is a particular task that might give me a problem, I am usually able to figure out a way to get it accomplished. Give me a day or two to work on it. Also, currently there is government assistance to provide equipment adaptations."

Q: What if I hire this person and they don't work out? Will I be able to let them go without a lot of trouble?

A: A Lou Harris poll concluded: "Nearly all disabled people do their job as well or better than other employees doing the same jobs. So, if you are willing to take a chance on me, I'll do my very best."

Q: Will my insurance go up?

A: "Not likely. Not one insurance company is known to have increased the premiums because the company hired a person with a disability."

Q: How will this disabled person get along with the other employees?

A: "I tend to develop a natural rapport with my fellow workers. I am comfortable with them and they are comfortable with me. Getting along has never been an issue."

Q: I don't exactly understand what this person's disability is and I am afraid to ask.

A: Don't give just the title of your disability, explain it and what you can do and how you work around the disability. "I have cerebral palsy. In my case this means I have profound weakness in my legs and lower body. Sometimes I rely on a walker. It does not affect how I think, solve problems or have fun."

Q: Will this disabled person be away a lot or prone to accidents on the job?

A: Offer your own safety and attendance record.
"Like lots of people with disabilities, we offer a better than average safety record. I'm very proud of my own."

Q: How will this person get to work on time?

A: "I will work out in advance a reliable transportation system. I always have."

What else should you know?

Realistically, the interview has three basic stages. The Arrival, The Interview, and the Finale. Each stage is outlined below.

The Arrival:

- Arrive 10-15 minutes early and dress to impress.
- Be courteous to everyone you meet.
- Present a positive, confident and enthusiastic attitude.

The Interview:

- Focus on the benefits you bring to the position.
- Stick to the topic and ask for clarification only when necessary.
- Thank the interviewer by name for his/her time

During the interview, make sure that you answer "the four questions", as well as, "the tough" ones, especially if your disability is visible.

The Finale:

- Follow up by telephone or letter to ask if a decision has been made.
- Review the interview questions and responses - learn from any mistakes and improve where necessary.
- Evaluate how well you think you did - this evaluation will strengthen your chances for future success.

How do you deal with disclosure?

Many job seekers often wonder if, when, and how to mention their disability, especially if it is not visible.

If..

Employers do not like surprises. Nor is it fair to hide something that could effect your job performance or the safety of others. Ultimately, to disclose or not is up to you, however it is wise to know where you stand legally. Here is what the Human Rights Commission has to say...

"A disability is only relevant to the job ability if it:

- threatens the safety or property of others, or
- prevents the applicant from safe and adequate job performance even when reasonable efforts are made to accommodate the disability".

When...

Generally, if you do not require special accommodation and you feel your performance will not be unduly affected by your disability, then most experts recommend not to disclose. At least until an offer is made.

How...

As honestly and factually as possible is the recommended procedure. Remember your role as an educator for your particular disability. Also, by displaying a sense of humour/and or a positive attitude toward your disability, you are communicating a desire to get on with the important issue, like how well you do the job.

Your keys to interview success

The focus of your interview should be you, not your disability. Remember to take with you...

- Several copies of an up-to-date résumé.
- A list of references or letters of reference.
- Questions you can ask.

What do you do now?

- Develop a list of questions an employer may ask you with suitable responses.
- Evaluate your presentation skills.
- Plan how you will convince the interviewer that you can do the job and much more.
- To be nervous is natural - use this energy to your advantage.

The 6th Essential is ...

Relevant interview questions and winning answers.

7th Essential: Promote Yourself

Statistics tell us that very few jobs come from newspapers, classified ads or employment agencies. In fact, most of them are found through contacts.

Start by marketing yourself. "Who you know" will get you to the door step. "What you know" will get you through the door.

How do you market yourself

The first step in marketing yourself is to tap into your network. Your goal is to find contacts that will lead you to employment.

Everyone knows at least 100 people. These are friends, family and acquaintances. They are the greatest place to start because you know them and they know you.

You may need to go further by joining professional and/or community organizations, such as volunteer groups, service clubs and business associations.

How do you get yourself connected?

A networking statement reflects who you are and the type of work that you want to do.

Let's look at one Ingrid Svenson created. She would use this one when meeting someone new.

Hi
I'm Ingrid Svenson. I'm very handy at cleaning and enjoy meeting people. I'd like to find a job helping out in a restaurant that is on a public transportation route.

A networking statement is:

- 1) Simply stated
- 2) Short
- 3) Jargon free
- 4) Memorable

Where do you use your networking statement?

- friends
- family
- social events
- previous employers
- volunteer organizations
- school (teachers and students)
- clubs
- case workers
- associations
- previous co-workers

Your keys to networking success

- Practice your networking statement until it feels comfortable for you.
- Work at starting and building a network - it will be with you all of your life.
- Never dismiss a contact as someone who is not beneficial to you.

What do you do now?

- Contact at least 3 people every day.
- Join organizations or attend functions where you can network.
- Work on giving and getting referrals.

**The 7th Essential is ...
A memorable networking statement.**

8th Essential: A Creative Job Search

Statistics tell us that about 15% of all jobs are advertised. The remaining 85% are part of the hidden job market that can be accessed through a creative job search.

How do you find the hidden jobs?

1) **Networking**

Networking is one of the most effective ways to begin your job search.

2) **Information Interviews**

The key here is not to ask for a job, but to gather information for the future. Always remember to

- Set up interviews with people who are employed in your target industry.
- Schedule interviews at their convenience, not yours.
- Leave your resume in case suitable opportunities open up.
- Arrive with lots of relevant questions.
- Send a thank you letter for their time.

3) **Volunteering**

Volunteering can be a creative job strategy when you have set your goals but a gap exists in achieving them. In order to increase both your skills and get some experience, perhaps the answer is volunteering.

4) **Using the Internet**

In order to cover the global market with your resume, put it "online". The Job Bank is a free service that connects employers with employees.

- It automatically presents your profile when an employer looks for skills matching yours.
- It creates a profile of your skills and stores them in a data base.
- It advertises your skills free of charge to thousands of employers.

The Internet can also be an amazing source of information about any company that has a web site.

Your keys to a creative job search

- Choose your future employer, rather than the other way around.
- Volunteering can be both satisfying and rewarding as part of your job search.
- Online resources represent a potential that has only recently been available.

What do you do now?

- Contact Volunteer Canada for an office near you at 1-800-670-0401.
- Use the Job Bank, go to the Job Bank Site.
- Check out government programs promoting employment.

The 8th Essential is ...

A list of alternative sources for your job search.

9th Essential: Success in the Workplace

Whether your new job is a stepping stone in your journey to reaching your long-term goals or it is your destination, you will want to do everything possible to make the most of it.

How do you act at work?

Tips for business etiquette:

- 1) Be on time, everytime
 - 2) Dress according to what the job requires (not less)
 - 3) Stay positive and have a good attitude
 - 4) Honour your commitments
- Don't use your disability as an excuse
 - Make sure your disability doesn't mean extra work for fellow employees.

What does it mean to have a good attitude at work?

The following are some traits that reflect a positive attitude:

- Co-operative
- Sociable
- Willing
- Motivated
- Enthusiastic
- Responsible
- Accommodating
- Respectful

What else should you know?

Basically, success in the workplace hinges on three key factors:

- how you act - i.e. your attitude
- how you think - i.e. your education and skills
- how you get along with others - i.e. your ability to work in a group

If you can demonstrate all three, you can go anywhere!

A word about assistive devices

Do you know everything about devices that can assist you in doing your job in a way that meets your employer's expectations?

In Ontario there are several associations or agencies that include "assistive devices" as part of their service. As well there are three programs to check out.

1. The ADP Program (Assistive Devices Program).

The ADP operates in co-operation with the Ontario Ministry of Health. If you qualify they will supply you with reading and writing aids as well as personal information and management systems.

2. The ODSP (Ontario Disability Support Program).

This program provides people with disabilities the supports they need to get and keep a job. Talk to a counsellor at your local Ministry of Community and Social Services office to see if you are eligible for "employment supports". There is a range of services, including interpretative assistance, technical aids, and transportation assistance.

3. The ATRC (Adaptive and Technology Resource Centre).

This centre does research and development for innovative solutions to the accessibility challenge. They specialize in work enhancement through technology. For example, they supply mini keyboards for people with limited hand movement and screen readers to persons who are blind.

Note: If you are bringing technical aids or assistive devices in a workplace, check with your employer to ensure compatibility.

Tips about searching for an employment support

- Many companies specialize in adaptive devices. Check to see if they are a Ministry of Health ADP vendor or are ADP approved.
- For hearing devices, call your local CHS.
- For vision and mobility aids, call your local CNIB.
- For Hearing Ear Dogs, Seeing Eye Dogs or Special Skill Dogs call the Lions Foundation of Canada.
- Remember that the Bell Canada Relay Service connects TTY users with hearing people.

See the resource section for contact numbers.

What do you say to your new boss?

Whenever you need assistance to perform your job, make sure you let your employer know about it. They may be able to supply helpful information about adapting their workplace to the new technology.

Your keys to workplace success.

- Make sure you completely understand what is expected of you and your assignments.
- Tell people you've just started and ask for help or guidance when you need it.
- Practice workplace etiquette
- Do more than is expected of you.
- Ask for feedback on your performance.

What do you do now?

- Make yourself invaluable - find a niche for yourself at work.
- Be reliable and dependable - follow through on everything.
- Be a part of the organization - support co-workers, encourage and work co-operatively with others.

The 9th Essential is ...

Tips and strategies to keep yourself in demand.

10th Essential: Make Your Own Job

Making your own job means choosing self-employment as a alternative way of making a living. Is this lifestyle for you? More and more, people are investigating the option of self-employment. According to Statistics Canada, there are 2.3 million small businesses in Canada - most of them are home-based, one person companies.

What's involved in starting your own business?

1) **First**

Check out the feasibility of your idea. Ask people if this is a good product or service that they are likely to buy, at a price that you can afford to sell it at. When exploring feasibility, take a careful look at your competition. What are they doing right and where might you improve or be different from them? Customers buy benefits! Know what motivates your customers to buy from you.

2) **Second**

Let your customers know you exist. To do that you will need strategies for networking, selling and promotion. To be effective in marketing your product, you will need a clear idea of who will buy from you. This is called a customer profile.

3) **Third**

Make sure you are personally and financially ready to start a business of your own. Successful entrepreneurs are persistent, have the discipline to self-manage a business and most importantly, know when to ask for help. They also understand the importance of planning for their success, and this means writing it down! If you are comfortable with your personal readiness, check out your financial situation. Also, ask yourself if you can survive until your business can afford to pay you.

The keys to making your own job

- Find a business that you enjoy.
- Test your idea to make sure you have customers that will buy from you at your price.
- Create a marketing plan that will appeal to your customers and let them know you are in business.
- Always keep the customers' needs foremost in your mind.
- Keep on top of your finances.
- Set long-term and short-term goals and then put them in place.
- Write a business plan and keep it current.
- Surround yourself with excellent people.
- Always be on the lookout for new opportunities.
- Never look back.

What do you do now?

- If you are interested in self-employment...
- Find a mentor, coach or consultant who will start and keep you on the right track.
- Get all the information and help you can (banks and government are good sources).
- Visit the Provincial Small Business Help Centres.
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The 10th Essential is ...
A plan for self-employment.

Resource Information and Web Sites

http://www.on.hrdc-drhc.gc.ca/english/work/jwtc_dislinks_e.shtml

The following information represents a partial directory of the many agencies and services to assist you in your job search. Some of this information has been provided by external sources. Although every effort has been made to ensure the accuracy and reliability of the content we accept no responsibility in this regard.

Inclusion of an agency or service in this directory does not constitute an endorsement, nor is omission a comment on the quality of the service provided.

Hint: To make the best of this resource guide we have divided the information into sections; Employment, Training, Self-Employment, Transportation, Youth, Agencies and Associations and Other Sites of Interest. We recommend you go to the website first to find the location of the office nearest you. Toll free numbers are provided when available.