

# Career EMPOWERMENT Curriculum

Taking Control of  
Your Career

*Preparing for  
Your Job Search*



## **Preparing for Your Job Search**

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### ***Introduction***

#### **Welcome!**

This module was created to help you fully prepare for a successful job search.

#### **Intended Outcomes**

This workshop is designed so that you will leave being able to:

- Approach Your Job Search with an Empowering Mindset
- Create a Resume
- Appear Professional at a Low Cost
- Network Effectively
- Proactively Handle Logistics and Other Obstacles (like transportation and childcare)

#### ***What other information do you want to get?***

#### **Ground Rules**

The following ground rules create the environment for an effective workshop:

- Everything will be kept confidential in this group.
- You will be encouraged to participate, but not called upon in class.
- Your questions are valid and if they cannot be addressed in class, we will put you in touch with the right resources after class.

#### ***What other ground rules would you like to include?***

## Preparing for Your Job Search

### *Approach Your Job Search with an Empowering Mindset*

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#### **Prepare Like an Athlete...like a Winner!**

By this we don't mean work out hours a day or eat more protein! We mean preparing ourselves mentally for a process that can be time consuming, stressful, and include disappointments. If we are not mentally prepared for the ups and downs of a job search, the process will be less effective and go more slowly.

Here's how to do it.

#### ***Visualize***

Athletes visualize themselves in the big game and big race daily. They create clear pictures of how they feel, what obstacles are in the path, and how they overcome them. As a survivor, the ability to visualize yourself overcoming obstacles can be really useful in the job search and in other areas of life. You can visualize mentally or through creating visual displays of your goals.

Right now, let's participate in a guided visualization focusing on interviews, the job offers you'll receive, and the first day at your new job.

What did you visualize?

## **Preparing for Your Job Search**

### ***Approach Your Job Search with an Empowering Mindset***

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#### **Think Positively**

We have 40,000 to 60,000 thoughts a day. Most of them are reactions and old patterns of thinking. We often feel out of control of our thinking. Many survivors might often feel controlled or constrained by former reactions or old patterns of thinking. You're not. Survivors can actually pause and choose thoughts. Brain science shows that this leads to positive outcomes more quickly than letting negative thoughts collect.

First, we must capture our automatic negative thinking about the job search.

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Second, we must remember times that we felt good, strong, and confident, even if they are not related to the job search.

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Third, we can identify positive thoughts that feel good to us to focus on throughout the job search process.

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## Preparing for Your Job Search

### *Approach Your Job Search with an Empowering Mindset*

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#### Get Support

Of course we need support whenever we have a big goal. And it's important that we get the right kind of support that provides us energy, focus, and optimism. It's not hard to find people who think the job market is bad, the economy is terrible, or your situation is impossible. You don't have to think in the same way. It's not that they're wrong, they may have some facts and reasons for what they believe.

You want to focus on what's positive. For every company that's doing poorly, there's one starting or growing. If you are a survivor that is looking for a new job or fresh start there are many opportunities to do so. People get new jobs and make fresh starts every day. Your situation is unique, and you will get what you're looking for. And you'll get it faster with safe and positive people supporting you.

Use the table below to see who is in your support system and where there are gaps.

Include people and organizations that provide you the following kinds of support:

- Job Search Basics
- Moral and Emotional Support
- Networking Connections
- Brainstorming Ideas

Name of Person or Organization	Type of Support they Provide	Ways to Use their Support	Ways to Thank Them

**-- Share about different kinds of support in your Discussion Group --**

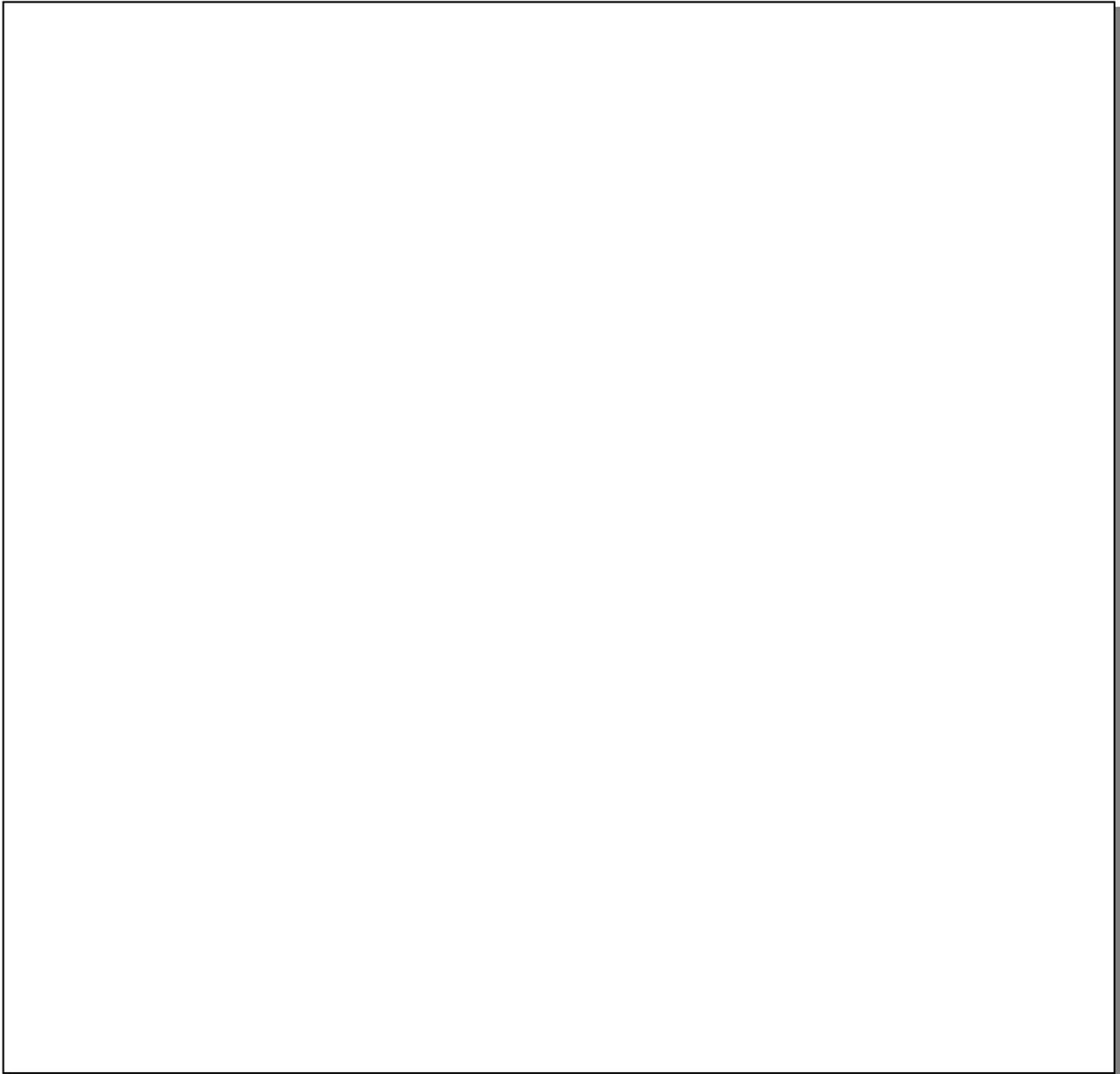
## **Preparing for Your Job Search**

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### ***Approach Your Job Search with an Empowering Mindset***

#### **Daily Actions**

Now that you know how to Visualize, Think Positively, and Get Support, in the box below capture what you will do on a daily basis to remain mentally strong throughout your job search.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, intended for the user to write their daily actions for staying mentally strong during a job search.

**-- Share your ideas with a Partner --**

## Preparing for Your Job Search

### Create a Resume

#### Resume Basics

Now that you are mentally in the right frame of mind for a job search you can create the foundation job search tool ... the resume!

#### Information to Include in Your Resume

To follow is the basic information that you want to include in your resume. Fill in the following charts. Then, later, you can use the information to create a professional looking resume. Take 10 minutes now and complete as much information as you can. See the Appendix for instructions on how to use the Women Employed's online Resume Builder.

Your Personal Information	
First and Last Name:	
Street Address:	
City, State, Zip Code:	
Email Address:	

Your Job Objective
Your job objective should describe exactly what your goal is, your qualifications, and what position you're applying for. The trick is keeping your job objective to one sentence. For example, "Talented secretary pursuing Office Manager position with Global Communications."

Key Skills	
[See the Appendix for a list of possible skills.]	
Skill:	
How did you use this skill? Two or three statements describing how you used this skill at a specific job or during different activities.	
Skill:	
How did you use this skill?	
Skill:	
How did you use this skill?	

## Preparing for Your Job Search

### Create a Resume

#### Information to Include in Your Resume (cont.)

Use a blank sheet of paper, if you need more room.

Work History	
Name of Employer or Company:	
City, State:	
When did you start working there (MM/YYYY)?:	
When did you stop working there (MM/YYYY)?:	
Job Title:	
Name of Employer or Company:	
City, State:	
When did you start working there (MM/YYYY)?:	
When did you stop working there (MM/YYYY)?:	
Job Title:	
Name of Employer or Company:	
City, State:	
When did you start working there (MM/YYYY)?:	
When did you stop working there (MM/YYYY)?:	
Job Title:	

Education	
Name of school/program you attended:	
City, State:	
Degree/Certificate:	
What did you study or major in?	
Year completed:	
Name of school/program you attended:	
City, State:	
Degree/Certificate:	
What did you study or major in?	
Year completed:	

## Preparing for Your Job Search

### Create a Resume

#### Information to Include in Your Resume (cont.)

Community Service	
Organization:	
Position held:	
When did you start volunteering there (MM/YYYY)?:	
When did you stop working there (MM/YYYY)?:	
Organization:	
Position held:	
When did you start volunteering there (MM/YYYY)?:	
When did you stop working there (MM/YYYY)?:	

#### Tips for Writing a Resume

Here are some tips you should follow when writing your resume.

**Keep it short.** Your resume should be one page. Sometimes it's okay to use two pages, depending on the type of job you're applying for, how much experience you have, and the employer.

**List your most recent job first.** Put your jobs in order, starting with your current or most recent job and ending with the oldest job.

**Include basic information about each job.** Include the company name, city/town and state, employment dates, your job title, and your responsibilities. If there are any gaps in your employment, it may be useful to list employment dates by the year, rather than by the month and year.

**Talk about your major accomplishments at each job.** Make sure you list accomplishments that can be quantified in some way. For example, "As a result of handling an additional 60 calls per day, I was recognized as Employee of the Month."

**Use action words.** Use words like "created," "managed," "ran," "handled," and "answered."

**List your awards.** Include awards you got in school for academic excellence, sports, clubs, etc.

**Include other experiences.** If you don't have a lot of job experience, be sure to include volunteer experiences.

## **Preparing for Your Job Search**

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### ***Appear Professional at a Low Cost***

Like it or not, people make first impressions based on our appearance. During the job search process we want people to notice you and not be distracted by how you look. This might mean toning down or amping up your usual style.

When choosing how to prepare your appearance for a job search consider the following. Take some time by yourself to answer the following questions.

**In the type of work I'm looking for, what will I wear on the job?**

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**What are the appearance standards for the type of work, company, or industry?**

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**Given this, what will I wear on the interview?**

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## Preparing for Your Job Search

### ***Appear Professional at a Low Cost***

Now that you know the expectations and how you want to appear, let's get creative about how you can get that professional look, even when you are in transition and on a budget. With your Discussion Group brainstorm ideas in the following areas. Best practices and examples are included to get you started!

<b>Appearance Area</b>	<b>Creative Cost Effective Ideas</b>
<p><b>Clothes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure clean and pressed</li> <li>• Include a jacket or sweater</li> <li>• Avoid jeans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borrow from sister</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> </ul>
<p><b>Hair/Makeup</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be simple and clean</li> <li>• Avoid strong perfumes or scents</li> <li>• Avoid extra flashiness</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Get make up done for free at a make up counter before the interview</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> </ul>
<p><b>Jewelry</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Less is more</li> <li>• Avoid too much flashiness</li> <li>• You only need one pair of earrings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shop at thrift store</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> </ul>
<p><b>Shoes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Be practical</li> <li>• Avoid too high of heels</li> <li>• Avoid sneakers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shop a sale at Payless</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> </ul>
<p><b>Purse/Bag/Resume/Business Cards</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Bring something to look organized</li> <li>• Don't worry about matching</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Borrow from friend</li> <li>• _____</li> <li>• _____</li> </ul>

**Be prepared with one interview outfit you feel great in!**

## Preparing for Your Job Search

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### *Network Effectively*

#### **Demystify Networking**

Simply stated, networking is connecting and building relationships. That's it. And it's THE key to an effective job search.

#### **The Basic Elements of Networking**

- Know what you are looking for in a career opportunity.
- Tell everyone (except those individuals with whom you have safety concerns).
- Ask for connections to open opportunities, people who might know of open opportunities, or companies you like.
- Ask to be introduced to people who are doing the work you want to do so that you can find out information from them about their work, their job, their company ... and then ask them for connections and referrals!
- Make use of the networking methods (face-to-face, telephone, online social media) that are most comfortable and safe for you.

*Which of the above do you do and do well?*

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*Which of the above do you avoid or not do well?*

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*What do you need to do differently to become a stronger networker?*

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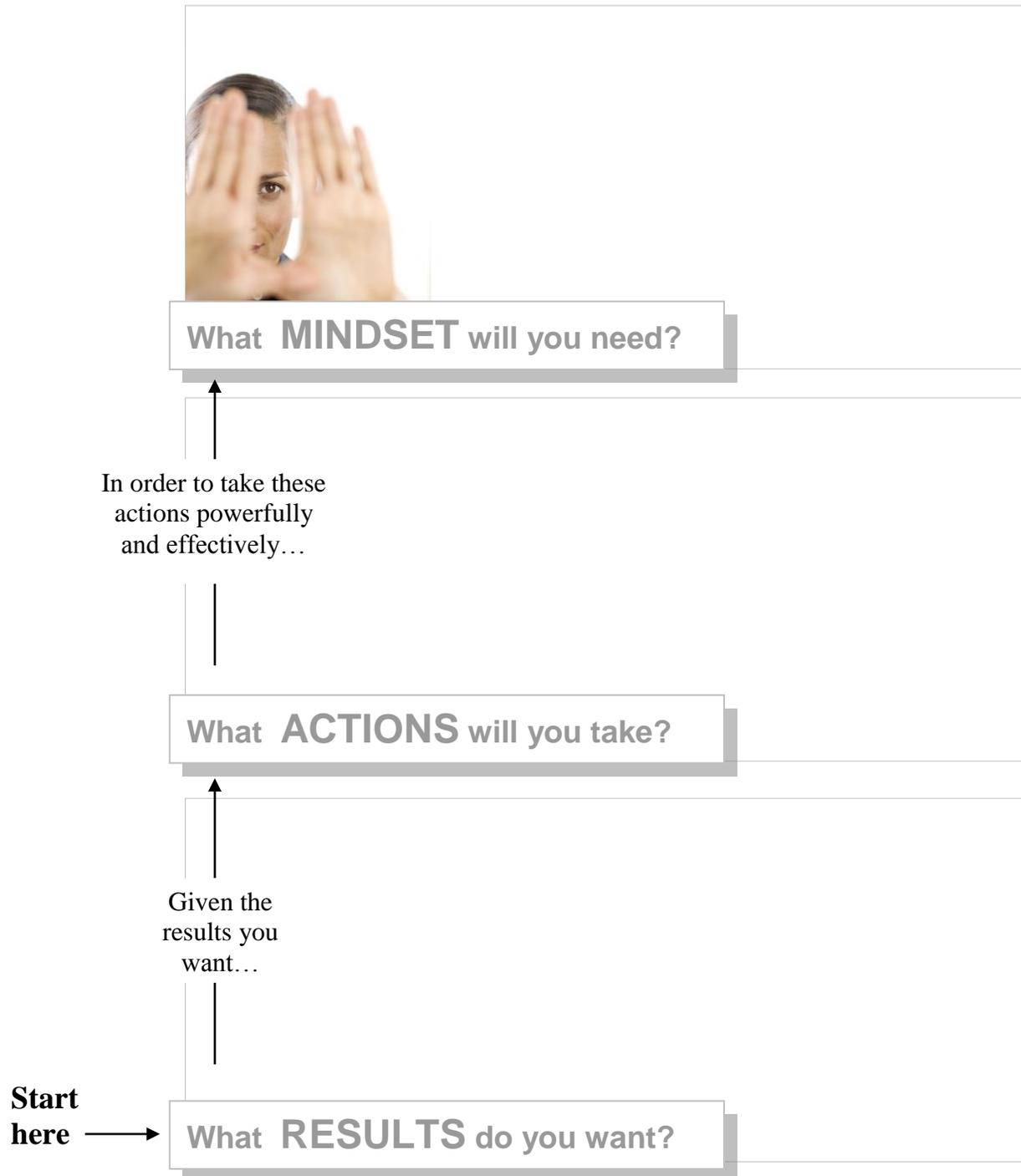
**Stand up and get ideas! Partner up with someone, share what you tend to avoid or not do well. Get ideas from your partner. Get another partner and repeat!**

## Preparing for Your Job Search

### *Network Effectively*

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### Choose Your Networking Framework



## Preparing for Your Job Search

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### *Network Effectively*

#### Your Elevator Pitch

Hi, my name is:

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I am looking for (full time employment, temporary employment, a new job):

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I am most interested in (certain types of work, industries, companies):

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Where I can provide (your essential skills):

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Continue the conversation with:

- Do you know anyone I should talk with who might know of opportunities?
- Do you have any questions about what I'm looking for?
- How can I help you?

**-- Partner Practice --**

## Preparing for Your Job Search

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### *Network Effectively*

#### Networking Top Tips

This is your networking checklist for success.

- Be yourself.**  
Just be you. Don't try to prove yourself, be too funny, or too smart.
- Choose your networking framework.**  
Choose how you will view yourself, others, and networking in this situation.
- Create a winnable game.**  
Set your simple intentions for each week, like make one new contact.
- Network with people with whom you feel confident and safe.**  
Share with people you trust and respect.
- Have your opening "elevator pitch" prepared.**  
Once you have your first sentence ready, the rest is easy!
- Be curious about the other person and ask questions.**  
Networking is about connecting. Connect to the other person by asking about them.
- Be a resource.**  
Find out what they are looking for and connect them to the people who can help.
- Ask clearly for what you need.**  
Ask clearly for what you need and see if they can make a connection.
- Be thankful.**  
Thank them at the end of the conversation. If appropriate, send a thank you note.
- Follow through.**  
If there are any actions to take after meeting them, do so.

## Preparing for Your Job Search

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### *Proactively Handle Logistics and Other Obstacles*

#### **What Are Your Logistical Obstacles?**

These are items that you might use as excuses for not going after that job.

Examples are:

- Who will watch my kids?
- How will I get back and forth from work safely?
- Can I work evenings and weekends?
- Do I have a safe environment for my children while I'm at work?
- What do my children need while I'm at work (i.e., counseling, dietary needs)?

*What are your barriers, questions, or excuses that slow down your job search process?*

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*Work with your partner to creatively think of ways you can be prepared to handle them.*

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*What ideas will you actually implement? By when?*

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## Preparing for Your Job Search

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### *Applying the Learning*

This module covered the following topics:

- Approach Your Job Search with an Empowering Mindset
- Create a Resume
- Appear Professional at a Low Cost
- Network Effectively
- Proactively Handle Logistics and Other Obstacles (like transportation and childcare)

What was the most valuable part of this module for me?

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What will I do differently as a result of this training?

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What is the most difficult aspect of preparing for a job search for me and how will I handle it?

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## Preparing for Your Job Search

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### **Resources**

The Allstate Foundation  
[www.allstate.com/foundation](http://www.allstate.com/foundation)

National Network to End Domestic Violence (NNEDV)  
[www.nnedv.org](http://www.nnedv.org)  
202-543-5566

National Domestic Violence Hotline  
1-800-799-SAFE (7233)

The Women's Alliance  
[www.thewomensalliance.org/index.php](http://www.thewomensalliance.org/index.php)

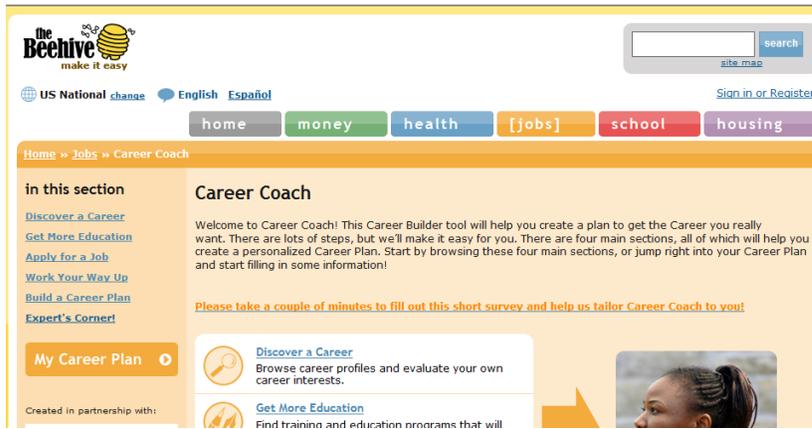
*The Women's Alliance is a national organization of independent, community based members who provide professional attire and career skills training to low income women and their families seeking self sufficiency.*

# Preparing for Your Job Search

## Appendix

### Instructions for creating a resume using Online Career Coach

1. Access the Women Employed website from <http://www.womenemployed.org>.
2. Scroll down to click on “Career Coach” in the right-hand margin.
3. Scroll down and click on the “Get started today!” link.
4. The Career Coach site will appear. Click on the “Create a Resume” link.



5. You will then be informed that you need to login to create a resume. Click on the “login” link. A User Login window will appear.



6. If this is the first time you are logging into the site, you will need to click on “Create new account” link. If you already have a Username and Password, type them in here.
7. Fill out the information and follow the instructions to create a new account.
8. Return to the “Create a Resume” page.
9. You will be prompted to name your resume. Give it an easy-to-remember name. Click “Save.”
10. You will arrive at the Resume Builder page. Choose to create either a Chronological or Functional resume.

**Resume Builder: Free, Professional Resume in Minutes!**

**Build Your Resume - Chronological Template**

The format below uses a chronological template, which highlights your work history. You can also choose a functional template, which highlights your skills. [Find out which is the best template for you.](#)

The chronological template will include:

- **Work Experience.** Work history, including where you've worked, what positions you held, your duties, and employment dates
- **Education.** Information about what school you attended and what type of training you've had.
- **Skills.** Any special skills you have that might interest an employer.
- **Community Service.** What groups you volunteer with, your position, and dates.

**Resume Builder: Free, Professional Resume in Minutes!**

**Build Your Resume - Functional Template**

The format below uses a functional template, which highlights your skills. You can also choose a chronological template, which highlights your work history. [Find out which is the best template for you.](#)

The functional template will include:

- **Key Skills.** Any special skills you have that might interest an employer and relates to the job your applying for.
- **Work History.** Work experience, including where you've worked, what positions you held, and employment dates.
- **Education.** Information about what school you attended and what type of training you've had.
- **Community Service.** What groups you volunteer with, your position, and dates.

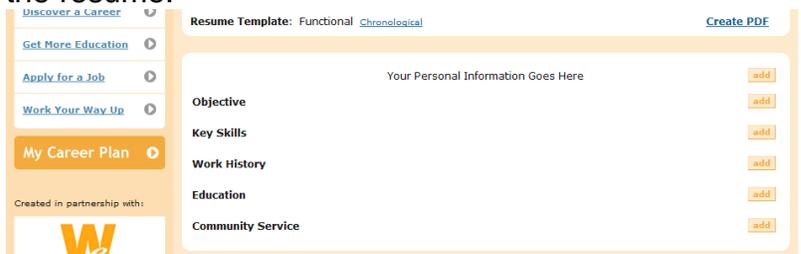
## Preparing for Your Job Search

### Appendix

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#### Instructions for creating a resume using Online Career Coach (cont.)

11. Click on the “Add” buttons to add in the information for the various components of the resume.



The screenshot shows a web interface for creating a resume. On the left is a navigation menu with links: "Discover a Career", "Get More Education", "Apply for a Job", "Work Your Way Up", and "My Career Plan" (highlighted in orange). Below the menu is a logo for "W2" with the text "Created in partnership with:". The main content area is titled "Resume Template: Functional Chronological" and has a "Create PDF" button in the top right. The central area contains a form with the following sections and "add" buttons: "Your Personal Information Goes Here", "Objective", "Key Skills", "Work History", "Education", and "Community Service".

12. Once you’ve added information click on the “Save” button.

13. Once you’ve completed all the resume information, click on “Create PDF.” A professional looking resume will be created for you.

## Preparing for Your Job Search

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### Appendix

#### List of Skills

- *Active Learning* – Understanding new information and using it for current and future problem-solving and decision-making.
- *Active Listening* – Giving your full attention to what other people are saying. Taking time to understand their points and asking questions. Waiting for the right time to make comments or ask questions, without interrupting.
- *Coordination* – Working as a team and making changes when necessary.
- *Critical Thinking* – Using logic and reasoning when problem-solving. Looking at the strengths and weaknesses of possible solutions.
- *Equipment Maintenance* – Performing regular maintenance on equipment. Figuring out what kind of maintenance is needed.
- *Equipment Selection* – Choosing the right tools and equipment needed to do a job.
- *Financial Resource Management* – Deciding how much money is needed to finish projects. Making sure all the related paperwork is in order.
- *Installation* – Installing equipment, machines, wiring, or programs and meeting requirements.
- *Instruction* – Teaching others how to do something.
- *Judgment and Decision-making* – Understanding the pros, cons, and results of potential actions and making the right decision.
- *Learning Strategies* – Using the right teaching and training methods for different situations.
- *Material Resource Management* – Getting the right equipment, facilities, and materials for different projects. Making sure these things are used properly.
- *Math Skills* – Using math skills to solve problems.
- *Negotiation* – Bringing others together and helping them work out their differences.
- *Operation and Control* – Controlling equipment or systems operation.
- *Operation Monitoring* – Watching equipment and making sure it's working properly.
- *Operations Analysis* – Analyzing needs and product requirements to create a design.
- *Performance Monitoring* – Looking at your performance and the performance of other individuals or organizations. Making improvements or taking corrective action where necessary.
- *Personnel Resource Management* – Motivating, developing, and directing people as they work. Identifying the best people for the job.
- *Persuasion* – Getting others to change their minds or behavior.
- *Problem Solving* – Identifying problems and developing options and solutions.
- *Programming* – Writing computer programs.
- *Quality Control* – Running tests and inspecting products, services, or processes. Evaluating quality or performance.

## Preparing for Your Job Search

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### *Appendix*

#### **List of Skills**

- *Reading Comprehension* – Understanding written sentences and paragraphs in work related documents.
- *Repairing* – Repairing machines or systems.
- *Science Skills* – Using scientific rules and methods to solve problems.
- *Service Orientation* – Looking for ways to help people.
- *Social Awareness* – Being aware of other peoples' reactions and understanding why they react in certain ways.
- *Speaking Skills* – Sharing information effectively and clearly with others.
- *Systems Analysis* – Deciding how a system should work. Understanding how changes in conditions, operations, and the environment will change how the system works.
- *Systems Evaluation* – Identifying measures or indicators of system performance and the actions needed to improve or correct performance, relative to the goals of the system.
- *Technology Design* – Designing, creating, or modifying equipment and technology so it fits the users' needs.
- *Time Management* – Managing your time and the time of others well.
- *Troubleshooting* – Understanding what causes mistakes and deciding how to fix them.
- *Writing Skills* – Communicating well through written materials. Making points clearly and in ways the appropriate audience can understand.