

# Job-Seeker's Handbook

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## How can we help you?

The Consortium for Worker Education is helping adults in New York City who:

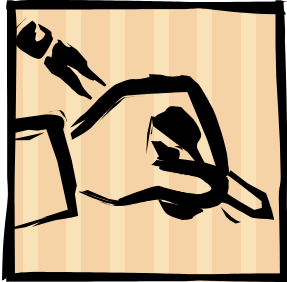
- Are looking for a job;
- Want a better job;
- Want education to improve their lives.

Our teachers provide classes in:

- English language
- Computers
- Reading and writing
- Math
- Job skills

Our career advisors also help people find jobs that they are interested in.

## Why have you come to CWE?



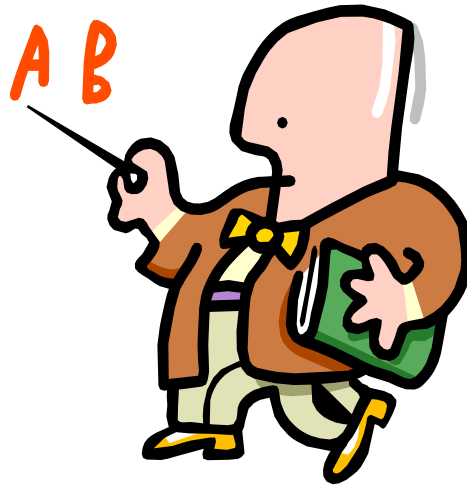
To get started, write the following information:

*My name:*

*Today's date:*

*Why I came to CWE:*

## What does "education" mean to you?



CWE provides many kinds of education to help adults get jobs and improve their lives. It is important for your teachers to know what education you have already had.

Please fill in the blanks below.

*My name*

*Today's date*

*What education I have had:*

*What I studied*

*Where*

*When*

## What do you need to do to succeed in this program?

CWE will provide teachers, career advisors, and classrooms to help you get the skills and job you want.

To help you succeed, we also ask that you do the following:

- Show respect to others;
- Come to class on time;
- Don't skip class;
- Do your homework;
- Cooperate with others;
- Keep our building clean;
- Make helpful suggestions.



## What job(s) have you had?



What jobs have you had in your life?

Have you ever been a . . .

- . . . garment worker
- . . . driver
- . . . waiter or waitress
- . . . cook
- . . . nursing assistant or home health aide
- . . . delivery person
- . . . cashier
- . . . security guard
- . . . salesperson
- . . . construction worker
- . . . receptionist or secretary
- . . . teacher

Write the names of jobs you have had here.

## What duties did you have in your jobs?

In your jobs, what duties did you have?

Here are some examples:

### A nursing assistant . . .

- . . . brings meals to the patient;*
- . . . makes the beds;*
- . . . helps the patient take a bath;*
- . . . helps the patient to eat;*
- . . . helps the patient to walk.*

### A cook . . .

- . . . orders food;*
- . . . cooks the meals;*
- . . . cleans the kitchen.*

### A mechanic . . .

- . . . changes the oil;*
- . . . changes tires;*
- . . . changes the battery.*

### A security guard . . .

- . . . helps customers;*
- . . . protects the building;*
- . . . reports emergencies;*
- . . . locks the doors.*

What duties have you had in your jobs? Write some of your duties here:



## What tools have you used?

Workers use tools in their jobs. Each job uses different tools.

Here are some examples:

### A garment worker uses . . .

- . . . scissors
- . . . a sewing machine
- . . . needles
- . . . patterns

### A carpenter uses . . .

- . . . a hammer
- . . . a saw
- . . . a drill
- . . . a screwdriver

### A secretary uses . . .

- . . . a computer
- . . . a telephone
- . . . a stapler
- . . . a printer

What tools have you used in your jobs? Write some of your tools here.



## What did you like or dislike about your jobs?



When you are trying to get a job, it is important to think about the "good" things and "not-so-good" things about that job. This helps you choose the right job.

What did you like about your jobs? What did you dislike?

For one of your jobs, write some things that you liked and some things that you disliked:

- Name of job:
- *Things that I liked about the job:*
  
- *Things that I disliked about the job:*

Here are some examples:

- John is a policeman.
- He likes his salary and his benefits, his co-workers, and helping people.
- He dislikes the long hours and working outside on cold days.
  
- Maria is a waitress.
- She likes helping people. She also likes eating free meals at her restaurant.
- She dislikes working at night. She dislikes standing on her feet for long hours.



## What job(s) are you looking for now?

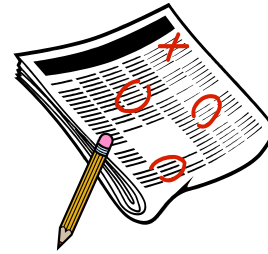
Do you want the same kind of job you had before? Do you want to try something different?

On the list below, write the jobs you are looking for now.

*My name:*

*Today's date:*

*I am looking for these jobs:*



## What are you doing to find a job?

To get the job you want, it is important to have a plan. Your plan should show you how to:

1. Decide what jobs to seek by listing:
  - ❖ what job(s) you want;
  - ❖ salary and benefits you want;
  - ❖ possible places where you would work.
  
2. Make a list of potential employers by talking with Career Advisors, friends, and relatives, and looking through job announcements in the newspaper, Internet, and employment centers.
  
3. Prepare a resume to show employers what you can do.
  
4. Contact potential employer(s) (by phone, by mail, or in person) to fill out job applications and set up job interviews.
  
5. Prepare for your interview by:
  - ❖ finding out more about the employer and the job;
  - ❖ preparing necessary documents (e.g., licenses, resumes) to bring to the job interview;
  - ❖ clarifying any questions you have for the employer and what you want to tell the employer;
  - ❖ dressing and grooming yourself appropriately.

6. Go to the job interview and:

- ❖ Ask questions about the job (so you get information you need to make a decision and to show the employer that you are interested);
- ❖ Show the employer what you know and are interested in.

8. After the interview, send a thank you note and any necessary follow-up documents to the employer.

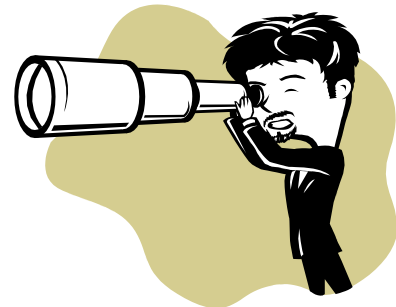
Finding a job is a lot of work. How many of these things have you already done?

Write down what you have been doing to find a job so far:

My name

Today's date

To find a job, I have been . . .



## **What jobs were cut in New York City since September 11, 2001?**

After September 11, 2001, many jobs in New York City were cut. To make a good plan for finding a job, you should understand what jobs are NOT so available right now.

Here are some jobs which were reduced after September 11<sup>th</sup>:

### **Jobs Hurt by the 9/11 Attacks**

**Many people lost jobs** as . . .

- Waiters and waitresses,
- Janitors and cleaners, elevator operators, building superintendents,
- Salespersons,
- Food preparation workers,
- Cashiers,
- Airport workers (baggage handlers, mechanics, limo drivers),
- Hotel workers (housekeeping . . . ),
- Theatrical workers.

**Many people lost hours and income** in these jobs:

- Taxi and car service drivers;
- Garment workers

**Most other industries also lost business** and either laid off employees or reduced their wages.

## Why did those jobs get reduced?

Some people lost their jobs after September 11<sup>th</sup>. Some people kept their jobs but had to work fewer hours or work for lower wages. Here are some reasons why jobs, hours, and wages were cut in New York City after 9/11/01:

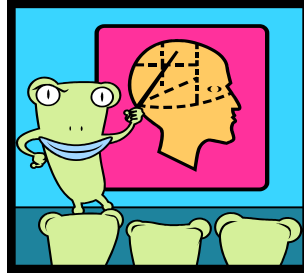
### Many people lost jobs or hours when:

1. their workplaces were closed or had to cut back on work hours if:
  - their building was damaged;
  - their street was closed;
  - customers stayed away due to:
    - fear,
    - lack of access to those businesses, or
    - reduction of their own income.
  
2. they were unable to work because they:
  - were injured or
  - had to stay home and care for others hurt in the attack.

The people closest to Ground Zero lost their jobs first. Then other industries which rely on business from Lower Manhattan were hurt next. For example, a baggage handler at LaGuardia Airport could lose his job if businesses below Canal Street were no longer sending employees to the airport to travel.

- Were you hurt by these changes?
- Do you know anyone who was hurt in these ways?

# What skills are required for available jobs?



To get a good job, most people need to understand, speak, read, and write English. But workers also need other skills.

This list shows the skills that U.S. workers should have:

## *Skills that Workers Need*

### Communication

- Read with understanding
- Write to convey ideas
- Speak so others can understand
- Listen actively
- Observe critically

### Decision-Making

- Use math (to solve problems and communicate)
- Solve problems and making decisions
- Plan

### Interpersonal Skills

- Guide others
- Resolve conflict and negotiate
- Advocate and influence
- Cooperate with others

### Lifelong Learning

- Use technology for information and communications
- Research
- Reflect and evaluate
- Take responsibility for one's own learning

## What skills and knowledge do you already have?



Most adults have many different types of skills.

When you are seeking a job, it is important to understand what skills and knowledge you already have. This helps you:

- To prepare a resume;
- To find a job that matches what you know;
- To plan your future education.

Prepare a list which gives this information:

- *My name*
- *Today's date*
- *My five strongest skills*
  
- *Five skills I need to improve most*



## How did you learn your skills?

Adults usually have many different skills. They learn those skills in school, but also in other places. Here are some ways that people can develop skills and knowledge:

- In their jobs,
- As family members,
- Through hobbies,
- By reading,
- By watching TV and movies,
- By using the Internet,
- By volunteering in the community,
- In their religious organization,
- In the military,
- By traveling,
- By talking with a counselor, doctor, lawyer, or other expert.

Pick three of the above "learning opportunities" and write some things that you learned in each of them. For example, you might write:

- As a student, I learned . . .
  - *Writing*
  - *Reading*
  - *Math*
  - *How to use a computer*
- As a worker in a restaurant, I learned . . .
  - *How to cook*
  - *How to order food*
  - *How to wait on tables*
  - *How to maintain kitchen equipment*
- As a family member, I learn . . .
  - *How to take care of my children and parents*
  - *How to take care of my house*
  - *How to repair things (clothes, furniture)*

## What English skills do you need in the workplace?



Most good jobs in New York City require that workers understand, speak, read, and write English. In most workplaces, you need English to . . .

- Get to know your co-workers
- Ask for help
- Ask for and give directions
- Answer the phone
- Deal with emergencies
- Locate tools and supplies
- Talk about safety problems
- Talk about health problems
- Help your customers

Complete the following:

- *The job I want now:*
- *How I would use English on that job:*

## What are your responsibilities, rights, and benefits as a worker?

As a worker, you have certain responsibilities, rights, & benefits.

### Worker Responsibilities

*A worker should try to . . .*

1. Come to work on time.
2. Do the work efficiently.
3. Get along with co-workers and supervisors.
4. Follow safety rules.
5. Protect the environment.
6. Take care of equipment and supplies.
7. Help customers.

### Worker Rights

*A worker has a right to . . .*

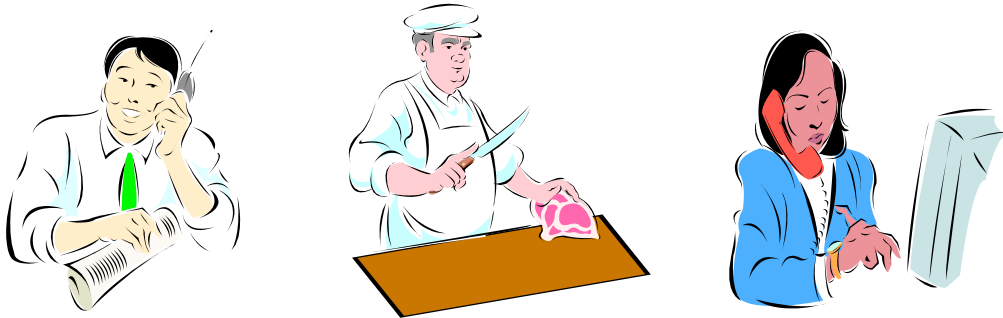
1. Get the wages and benefits promised by the employer.
2. Work in a safe workplace.
3. Not be discriminated against due to race, religion, disability, gender, sexual orientation, or political affiliation.
4. Not be harassed on the job.
5. Suggest improvements needed in the workplace.
6. Get Workmen's Compensation if needed.

### Worker Benefits

*A worker might have these benefits:*

1. Vacation, sick days, and personal days
2. Health insurance (including medical, dental, & optical)
3. Retirement funds
4. Unemployment compensation

## What can a union do for you?



## Why do people join unions?

A union is an organization which represents the employees of a company or industry. Unions try to help their members get the following advantages:

- good wages;
- medical, retirement, and other benefits;
- job security;
- safe worker conditions; and
- education and training programs.

## What responsibilities do union members have?

In return for these advantages, union members have responsibilities to their union. Union members should:

- Participate in union meetings;
- Vote for union leaders;
- Consider running for a union office;
- Work in union committees;
- Keep informed about union issues;
- Pay union dues;
- Try to build a strong, democratic union.



## Do you want to join a union?

Not all workplaces have unions. If you want to be a union member, you should look for workplaces that have unions. If you find a workplace with a union, ask for more information about the union that is represented there. Ask workers who work there, or call the union headquarters and get the name of the union's leaders. Talk to those union officials to find out what role the union plays in the company. You can also look on the union's Web site or stop at the union office for more information.

## If you become a union member . . .

Once you are hired into a unionized company, you should try to exercise your responsibilities as a union member. Go to meetings. Read the union newsletter and Web site. Talk to your union steward and your fellow workers. Find out what issues the union is working on. Get involved in making the union strong.

The AFL-CIO and some unions have leadership training programs for members. You might sign up for that training so you will learn how you can help your union help you and your fellow workers.





## What are obstacles to finding and keeping a job?

It's not easy to find a job. It's also not always easy to keep a job after you have found it!

There are many things that make it hard to find and keep a job. Some of these "obstacles" are listed below.

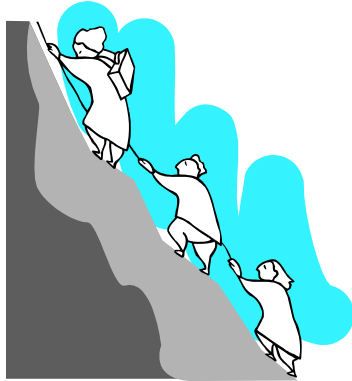
### Obstacles to Finding a Job

1. You don't have the skills required for the job.
2. You don't have anyone to care for your family.
3. You don't have transportation.
4. You have health problems
5. You don't have a good plan for finding a job.
6. You have unrealistic job goals.
7. No jobs are available.
8. You don't have contacts at the workplace (to help you "get your foot in the door")
9. The employers unfairly discriminate against you.

### Obstacles to Keeping a Job

1. You can't handle the job demands due to:
  - ❖ a lack of skills required for the job and
  - ❖ a lack of training opportunities in the workplace or in the community.
2. You have difficulty getting to work or attending regularly due to:
  - ❖ Lack of childcare or eldercare
  - ❖ Lack of transportation
  - ❖ Health problems
3. Your workplace is unsupportive due to:
  - ❖ Supervisors or co-workers who don't help workers succeed;
  - ❖ Harassment or other discriminatory practices

## What can you do to overcome those obstacles?



Here are some steps you can take to overcome obstacles you might face:

### How to overcome obstacles to finding a job

- Obstacle: You don't have the skills required for the job.  
Strategy: Get more training (at a school, from a friend or relative, through reading of manuals or viewing of tapes) before being hired or after getting hired (either at the workplace or elsewhere)
- Obstacle: You need someone to provide care for family members.  
Strategy: Get someone to provide childcare or eldercare. Find funds to pay for childcare or eldercare. Find an employer who provides childcare.
- Obstacle: You don't have transportation to the workplace.  
Strategy: Buy or borrow a car. Fix your car. Move closer to job. Find someone to ride with. Find funds to pay for carfare. Find an employer who provides transportation (e.g., a shuttle bus) to the job.

- Obstacle: You have health problems.  
Strategy: Take care of health problems through getting medical care and self-improvement (exercise, better diet, stop smoking, etc.). Read guidebooks and view tapes about how to improve your health. Get health insurance, if needed.
  
- Obstacle: You don't have a plan for finding a job.  
Strategy: Get help from a career counselor or take a career-planning course. Read guidebooks on how to develop a career plan.
  
- Obstacle: You have unrealistic job goals.  
Strategy: Same as under "lack of a job-search plan" above.
  
- Obstacle: No jobs are available.  
Strategy: Consider looking for a different type of job if the job you want isn't available. Consider moving to a different area where the jobs you want are more available.
  
- Obstacle: You don't have contacts at the workplace (to help you "get your foot in the door")  
Strategy: Call, write, or stop by personnel office to introduce yourself, indicate your interest in working at this workplace, and make an appointment to find out about available jobs;
  
- Obstacle: The employer uses discriminatory hiring practices.  
Strategy: If you can prove an employer discriminates by race, age, or gender, or otherwise when hiring, you can file a complaint with the local Equal Employment Opportunity office.





## How to overcome obstacles to keeping a job

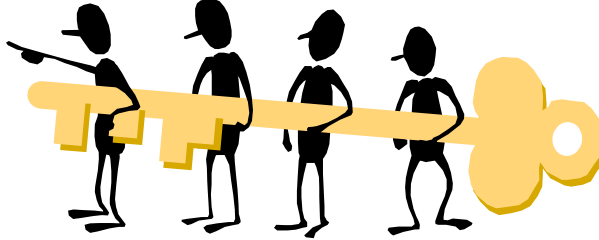
- Obstacle: You can't handle the job demands due to a lack of skills required for the job and lack of training in the workplace  
Strategy: Ask your supervisor or union representative for training at the workplace. Or ask them to send you to for training in the community. If they won't provide it, get more training (at a school, from a friend or relative, through reading of manuals or viewing of tapes) after getting hired (either at the workplace or elsewhere).
- Obstacle: It is difficult getting to work or attending regularly because you need to care for family members.  
Strategy: Get someone to provide care for your children, older relatives, or others who need it. Find funds or a daycare center to provide childcare. Ask if the employer can provide childcare on-site or cover childcare costs.
- Obstacle: You lack reliable transportation. This makes it hard to get to work.  
Strategy: Buy or borrow a car. Fix your car. Get auto insurance. Move closer to the job. Find someone to ride with. Find funds to pay for carfare. Find out if the employer provides transportation (e.g., a shuttle bus) to the job.
- Obstacle: You have health problems. This makes it hard to get to work or do your work properly.

Strategy: Take care of health problems by getting medical care and self-improvement (exercise, better diet, stop smoking, etc.). Read guidebooks and view tapes about how to improve your health. Get health insurance, if needed. See what is covered by your employer's health insurance plan.

- Obstacle: Supervisors or co-workers don't help you succeed.  
Strategy: Talk with your supervisors and co-workers, to explain what supports (e.g., guidance, feedback, information) you need from them. If you don't feel comfortable talking with those people, you might talk with your union representative or department manager.
- Obstacle: You experience harassment or other discriminatory practices at work.  
Strategy: Talk with your supervisor, department manager, Equal Employment Opportunity manager, or union steward about this problem. If necessary, you might contact a lawyer or the local Equal Employment Opportunity Commission office.



## What are your next steps for a job and education?



You are now at the end of this handbook. Now it's time to plan what you will do next to:

- find a job;
- get further education to help you meet your goals as a worker, family member, and community member.

To do a plan, please complete the list below:

### My Next Steps

*My name:*

*Today's date:*

*Job I am seeking now:*

*Steps I need to take to get that job:*

*Education I might want to get:*

*Steps I need to take to get that education:*