

Steps to Job Search



By

Malini Chib, *Chairperson, ADAPT Rights Group*
Anita Prabhu, *Co-Chair, ADAPT, Rights Group*



Preface



Dear Candidates,

The ADAPT Rights Group has been working on creating awareness on different disability issues for the past few years. The team of achievers has always been keen on encouraging self advocacy on part of a person with disability.

Self advocacy does not come easy, unless an individual is an empowered person. Employment is one of the crucial factors which empower a person.

This booklet is an attempt to provide some key strategies on applying for a job and how to keep it.

Sincerely,

Malini Chib,

Founder, ADAPT Rights Group.

Strategies to Get a Job

Successful people have a strategy in order to achieve the goals that they set for themselves. You need to be very clear about what you want. Be specific about what employment you want and what your conditions are.

Before you write down your employment goals, make sure you take into consideration your skills, qualifications, contacts, interest and any barriers you think you face.

ACTION PLAN

- ♻ Set employment goal
- ♻ Make a list of everything needed to accomplish your goal
- ♻ Put your plan to work
- ♻ Evaluate your plan for effectiveness every week



Skills and Strengths that match your job

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

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

A skills assessment will answer the following questions:

- ⦿ What are your skills and strengths?
- ⦿ What does your chosen career require?
- ⦿ What skills do you still need?

Is there a gap in what you know and what you need? If so you can:

- ⦿ Rethink your career
- ⦿ Get More Training
- ⦿ Get more experience

Your Keys to Assessing Individual Skills and Strengths

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



A resume that sells

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.

Your keys to a successful resume

- ☑ 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



Whatever format you choose, keep in mind that the purpose is to promote YOU

Remember to mention

- Professional strengths
- Education
- Additional qualifications
- Professional Experience
- Related Employment
- Affiliation
- Skills
- Interest

Typical Resume

Headings	Contents
Identification	Your name, address, contact numbers and e-mail
Highlights of Qualifications	Years of experience, Top Skills, Personal Attributes
Relevant Experience	Company name and location, Years worked, Title and / or skills Education and Training: Last level of education, Relevant courses, workshops, and seminar
Interests and Volunteer Work	Achievements / awards, Special Interest, Committees, Projects
References	"Available Upon Request"

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.

Your Address Street, city, postal code

Today's Date Month, day and year

Addressee Name, title, address

Salutation i.e. Dear Mr. Paul O'Toole

First

- State why you are writing
- Identify the position you are applying for
- Provide a general comment about the company

Second

- State academic qualifications if required
- Highlight experience that is relevant to the job

Third

- Match your skills with those required for the position
- Provide the reader with reasons for hiring you

Fourth

- Request action
- Indicate that you will follow up and do it

Closing i.e. Sincerely or yours truly
Your name



Keys to a successful interview

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.

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

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.

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.



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:

- ⦿ Be on time, everytime
- ⦿ Dress according to what the job requires (not less)
- ⦿ Stay positive and have a good attitude
- ⦿ 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!

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.



What not to do

Some of the most frequently mentioned complaints of employers and supervisors are listed below.

- ⦿ Frequently missing work
- ⦿ Being habitually late
- ⦿ Being too aggressive with your supervisor or co-workers
- ⦿ Talking to your supervisor or co-workers when they are busy
- ⦿ Expressing anger when work is constructively criticized
- ⦿ Letting your emotions influence your work
- ⦿ Treating people unfairly
- ⦿ Taking credit for a group effort
- ⦿ Ignoring company policies and rules
- ⦿ Always being the first one out of the door at the end of the day
- ⦿ Leaving early for lunch or breaks and coming back late
- ⦿ Acting superior to your co-workers and boss
- ⦿ Taking comments about your work personally



- ⊙ Always trying to gain personal advantage
- ⊙ Asking a lot of unnecessary questions
- ⊙ Complaining to higher management before talking to your immediate supervisor
- ⊙ Being extremely sensitive to comments made by co-workers or supervisors
- ⊙ Always making excuses when there are problems
- ⊙ Blaming others for your own mistakes
- ⊙ Complaining all the time
- ⊙ Doing personal tasks during working hours, such as reading magazines or making personal phone calls
- ⊙ Always complaining about your job, boss or co-workers
- ⊙ Trying to learn other's jobs before you learn your own
- ⊙ Constantly watching the clock
- ⊙ Ignoring safety rules

Source: www.hrdc.gc/asp/gateway.asp?hr=en/on/work/10-essentials.shtml&



Courtesy

“10 Essentials to get That Job! An Employment Guide for Persons with Disabilities” Gloria Hughes in Peel, Halton, DUFFERIN, HRDC.



ADAPT (formerly The Spastics Society of India)

Chairperson's Secretariat & Head Office, Upper Colaba Road, Mumbai - 400 005.
Tel.: 2215 0555 / 2218 6813 Fax: 2218 6813

National Resource Centre for Inclusion, K.C. Marg, Bandra Reclamation, Bandra (W) Mumbai - 400 050, Tel. 2644 3666, 2644 3688 Fax: 2643 6848

National Job Development Centre, Near Diamond Garden, Sion - Trombay Road, Chembur, Mumbai - 400 071. Tel.: 2520 9413 / 2520 8968 Fax: 2520 6810

Sultan Noorani Memorial Karuna Sadan, Urban Health Centre, Dharavi 60 Feet Road, Room No. 109, 110, Dharavi, Mumbai 400 017. Tel: 2407 4455

adaptbombay@yahoo.co.uk

