Job Readiness Handbook
A Guide to Finding Your First Job
People can change jobs many times during their lives. Often, one’s first job is an entry level job in a restaurant, hotel or supermarket. After working in entry level jobs for a while, people are able to get better jobs. They can work and train for a better job by studying part-time. People in your new community understand that their first job is only a stepping stone to a better job in the future.

Entry level jobs are typically those that require little experience and rely on on-the-job training. This includes jobs in:

- **Food Service**: Cashier, dishwasher, host, kitchen prep, dining room attendant (bus boy)
- **Factory/Warehouse**: Assembler, package handler
- **Hotel**: Housekeeper, room attendant, laundry attendant, porter (bell boy)
- **Retail**: Cashier, stocker, sales associate
- **Caregiving**: Child caregiver, elder care assistant
- **General Labor**: Landscaper, car washer
There are many benefits to an entry level job

- It allows you to get work experience. A work record will let others know that you can show up on time for the job and work hard.
- Working with locals in your new community is a very good way to learn about the culture.
- An entry level job is a good place to practice your language. Using the language every day at work will help you learn quickly.
- It gives you time to learn what kinds of jobs there are where you live. You will learn what you like and what you do not like to do for work. This will help you find a better job in the future.
- An entry level job will allow you to provide an income for yourself and your family. Many employers are happy to hire people so they can take care of themselves and become independent.
- Entry level jobs often have flexible hours so you can go to classes when you are not working. Many people in entry level jobs work in the day and go to school at night or they work at night and go to school during the day.

Speak to your employment counselor if you have difficulties accessing transportation, childcare or family member care. They can help you find solutions to overcome these barriers.

When preparing for your first job, please keep the following in mind, Entry level jobs:

Will probably pay minimum wage
- Minimum wage means the lowest pay an employer can give you according to law.
- The minimum wage is different for each country.

Will be hard - you will have to work a lot
- If you prove to your manager that you are a good worker, you will get a pay raise and maybe a better job in the future.
- Your work history is very important. A good work history can help you get a better job in the future.
- To have a good work history, you should:
  - Be on time
  - Never miss work
  - Work hard
  - Be friendly and nice to your colleagues and customers

Will have different hours: morning, afternoon, evening…
- It is important that you are flexible with time when looking for your first job in your new community.

It is important that you get started on "the right foot." Do not waste time trying to get a job that is out of reach for you right now. Take an entry level job for six months or a year and then you will be ready for your next step! An entry level job will:

Help you get a better job in the future
- If you are a good worker, your manager can give you a promotion (better position in the company).
- You could also find out about other jobs in the community.

Your manager for your first job can be a reference to help you get your next job
- If you have a good work history, you can use your boss as a reference. People who have good references can get very good jobs.
### EMPLOYMENT GLOSSARY

Review and memorize these important employment-related terms:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Definition</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>APPLICANT</strong> (or CANDIDATE)</td>
<td>a person who asks for a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>APPLICATION</strong></td>
<td>a form that people fill out to ask for something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>APPLY</strong></td>
<td>to complete an application for a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>AVAILABLE</strong></td>
<td>ready to begin work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>BACKGROUND CHECK</strong></td>
<td>employer checks on your criminal history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>COVER LETTER</strong></td>
<td>a document to provide additional information on the skills, experience and motivation of a job seeker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEDUCTION</strong></td>
<td>the money that the employer takes from a person’s pay for taxes and insurance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEPENDABLE</strong></td>
<td>reliable, responsible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DESIRED SALARY</strong></td>
<td>money that a person would like to get for working a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td>school experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EMPLOY</strong></td>
<td>to give a person a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EMPLOYEE</strong></td>
<td>a person who works for someone, a worker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EMPLOYER</strong></td>
<td>a person who gives someone a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EMPLOYMENT</strong></td>
<td>a job, work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EMPLOYMENT AGENCY</strong></td>
<td>a company that finds jobs for people, some charge a fee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>EMPLOYMENT CONTRACT</strong></td>
<td>a document you sign when you are offered a job which details the terms of the job (duration, pay, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FULL TIME JOB</strong></td>
<td>work for 35 or more hours a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HIRE</strong></td>
<td>to give a person a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>HOBBY</strong></td>
<td>an activity a person does for fun such as playing sports, gardening, or sewing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INTERVIEW</strong></td>
<td>a meeting with a manager; manager asks applicant questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>JOB TITLE</strong></td>
<td>the name of a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LABOR LAWS</strong></td>
<td>the rights and responsibilities of a worker and their employer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>LABOR UNIONS</strong></td>
<td>a group of people who work to protect the rights of workers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PART-TIME JOB</strong></td>
<td>work for less than 35 hours a week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PERMANENT JOB</strong></td>
<td>a job which is expected to last a long time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>POSITION</strong></td>
<td>a job title, the name of a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>PREVIOUS</strong></td>
<td>before, in the past</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>QUALIFICATIONS</strong></td>
<td>skills needed for the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>QUALIFIED/QUALIFY</strong></td>
<td>when someone has the skills for the job; to have the skills for the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REASON FOR LEAVING</strong></td>
<td>why a person stopped working at a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RECOMMENDED BY (OR REFERRED BY)</strong></td>
<td>how a person heard about a job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>REFERENCE</strong></td>
<td>a person who recommends someone for a job based on their knowledge of the person’s professional experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>RESUME/ CURRICULUM VITAE (CV)</strong></td>
<td>a summary of a person’s work experience and education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SALARY</strong></td>
<td>money that a person receives for work, wages, pay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SHIFT</strong></td>
<td>the time of day that a person works (e.g., (day): 8:00 – 16:00, (evening): 16:00 – midnight, (night, graveyard): midnight – 8AM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SKILL</strong></td>
<td>something that a person can do well</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>STRENGTHS</strong></td>
<td>skills, positive behaviors, good things about a person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SUPERVISOR</strong></td>
<td>the boss or manager on the job</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TEMPORARY JOB</strong></td>
<td>a job which is expected to last a short time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>VOCATIONAL EDUCATION</strong></td>
<td>a skills training school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WAGE</strong></td>
<td>the amount of money you will be paid for working. It can either be per hour, per month or per annum (e.g., 8 euro per hour, 1500 euro per month, or 18,000 per annum)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WORK HISTORY (OR WORK EXPERIENCE)</strong></td>
<td>all the jobs you have had in the past</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Job Search Process
This guide covers the following steps needed to secure your first job:

01 Determine what type of job is suitable for you

02 Begin looking for a job

03 Fill out applications

04 Follow up on the application

05 Job interview

06 Follow up on the interview

07 Get hired and start working

Determine what type of job is suitable for you

1. How many hours per week will you work:

   Q: What is a full-time job? (F.T. or F/T)
   A: 35-40 hrs/week

   Q: What is a part-time job? (P.T. or P/T)
   A: Less than 35 hrs/week; schedule changes

   Q: What is an on-call job? (O.C. or O/C)
   A: You only work when they need you

   Q: What is overtime? (O.T. or O/T)
   A: More than 35 hours in one week. Pay is either 1.25 or 1.5 times your normal salary. You can only work up to a maximum of 48 hours on average in a week per EU law

   Q: What is a temporary job? (CDD)
   A: Job which will not last a long time

   Q: What is a permanent job? (CDI)
   A: Job that is not going to end soon. Temp to Perm- some jobs may allow you to work temporarily for a period before switching you to a permanent contract if they want you to continue.

   Q: Seasonal Jobs
   A: Hire for season, e.g., summer (May-Sept)

2. Shift = the time period during which you are at work

   1st shift = day shift (6:00-18:00)             3rd shift = graveyard, nightshift (22:00-6:00)
   Offices, Stores, Security                          Security, Hospitals, Fire dept., Factories

   2nd shift = swing shift (14:00-24:00)
   Stores, Restaurants, Security, Hospital, Factories

3. Transportation / Location

   How far is the job from your house?
   Is there a bus you can take to get to work on time every day?
List of Personal Qualities

Personal qualities are personal characteristics of an individual. They are what make up one’s personality. Which words best describe you? Put a check next to 5 of these words.

- Ambitious
- Flexible
- Artistic
- Friendly
- Calm
- Hardworking
- Careful
- Helpful
- Cheerful
- Honest
- Committed
- Humorous
- Confident
- Independent
- Considerate
- Open-Minded
- Consistent
- Organized
- Cooperative
- Outgoing
- Creative
- Patient
- Dependable
- Productive
- Easy-Going
- Punctual
- Efficient
- Responsible
- Enthusiastic
- Quick
- Energetic
- Strong
- Fast Learning
- Detail/Follow-through Skills
- Artistic Skills

Identifying Skills

Below are 12 families of skills.

Skills are things that you learned how to do through training or experience. Circle those which you have demonstrated ability, recently and in the past.

1. Manual Skills  
Finger speed and dexterity, assembling, building, fixing, repairing, operating tools or machinery, typing, filing, weaving.

2. Outdoor Skills  
Coordination and agility, swimming, hiking, climbing, camping, sports, farming, working with animals.

3. Communication Skills  
Writing, reading, public speaking, debating, teaching, foreign language skills, reporting, publicizing, proof reading.

4. Investigative Skills  
Observing, inspecting, examining, researching, analyzing, problem solving, classifying, diagnosing, evaluating.

5. Intuitinal/Innovating Skills  
Imagining, inventing, designing, creating, improvising, developing.

6. Human Relation Skills  
Helping people, interviewing, listening, serving, taking care of, treating kindly.

7. Leadership/Management Skills  
Initiating, organizing, leading, managing, coordinating, directing others.

8. Persuading Skills  
Selling, promoting, fund-raising, negotiating, arbitrating, motivating, influencing.

9. Numerical Skills  
Computing, calculating, taking inventory, keeping financial records, managing money, working with statistics, budgeting, preparing financial reports.

10. Performing Skills  
Acting, singing, dancing, getting up before a group, making people laugh, playing music, demonstrating products.

11. Detail/Follow-through Skills  
Following instructions, completing a task, paying attention to detail, organizing, being responsible, resourcefulness.

12. Artistic Skills  
Designing, drafting, illustrating, visualizing, decorating, drawing, painting, creating, composing.
Begin Looking For a Job

Where to Find Job Leads and Employers

FRIENDS & FAMILY

The BEST way to find a job is to have your friends and family help you find a job. They can help by taking you for a job search, by asking their friends if they know of job openings and they can take you to apply for a job at their workplace.

NEWSPAPERS/HELP WANTED ADS

Employers put hiring advertisements in the newspaper and look for workers. Look in the “Classified” section of the newspaper, you can find job listings under “Vacancies” or “Employment.”

INTERNET

Most companies post their openings either on their own website and/or on job search engines. If you know how to use the internet, you can fill out an online application or follow the instructions if they require you to email your CV and cover letter.

WALK IN/CALL; GO TO AGENCIES

Go to stores, restaurants, malls and staffing agencies to check if there are jobs available. If you see “We are Hiring” signs, that means they are looking for workers.

JOB FAIRS

This is where a group of employers get together and recruit new employees. You will see announcements for Job Fairs in the newspaper, radio, online or TV. When you go, dress nicely, and bring many copies of your CV to handout to potential employers.

CAREER OR JOB CENTERS

The local municipality or Regional Career Centers can help you look for a job. They also have job-related trainings and other help available.
**Applying Online**

In order to apply for jobs online, you are required to have an email account. Email accounts are free and you can open one at any of these websites: Gmail, Yahoo or Hotmail.

Some companies may request that you email them your resume or CV and/or a cover letter. You will need to send it as a pdf or word document and should give it an easily identifiable title such as John.Smith.9.3.18.docx. Read the instructions carefully.

If your CV does not look similar to the example in Appendix 2, you can create a new one using the Europass template found [here](#) or talk to your employment counselor to create one according to the standard in your new community.

Some online applications have an online assessment where an employer asks a series of questions which you must either Agree or Disagree with or select a multiple choice answer. These assessments are used to filter out the candidates whose personality or skillset does not match the job profile.

**Applying in Person**

Before you go in, you may want to call to check when they are open or when the manager will be available. Calling on the telephone takes practice. WRITE DOWN WHAT YOU WANT TO SAY BEFORE YOU CALL!

When you go to ask for an application:
- Dress nicely
- Stand up straight
- Smile
- Look the person directly in the eye

**Ask for an application using this template to practice:**

1. Hello, my name is ________________________________
2. I am interested in applying for ________________________________
   (Say what the job is or what the advertisement said)
3. I have experience ____________________________________________
   I have worked as a ____________________________________________
   I know how to ____________________________________________

**Fill out Applications**

You should apply for at least 2 jobs per day. Always bring your CV and documents with you.

**Asking for an application in person:**

*Hello. My name is ______. Is there a manager I can talk to about a job?*

*Hello. My name is ______. Do you have any job openings I can apply for?*

*Hello. My name is ______. Can I please have a job application?*

*ALWAYS SMILE AND SAY “THANK YOU”!*

**Write Down all Employers you Contact**

- Fill out a JOB SEARCH RECORD (see appendix 1) every time you call about a job or fill out an application so you can keep track of the jobs you apply to.
- Use your job application sample information to fill it out.
- Read the whole application before you start to fill it out.
- Use a pen only (Not a pencil).
- Print or type your application. Print neatly and carefully.
- Always sign your application.
- Do not cross out words.
- If you make a mistake, complete a new application.
- DO NOT fill in sections that say: For office use only, For company use only, Do not write below this line and do not write in shaded areas
- When you finish, return the application to the employer, SMILE and say THANK YOU!

Sometimes, you will have to answer some questions. They will tell you that they will call or email you. Sometimes they do and sometimes they don’t. Do not stop and wait for them to call. Keep applying for other jobs!
Job Application Sample

If you have never filled out a job application or created a CV before, you should start by completing the basic information that will be required of you. This includes:

Name: ____________________________
Address: ___________________________
Telephone: ___________________________
Email: ____________________________

Education/Training (start with most recent)

From ____________________________
To ____________________________
School: ____________________________
Location: (city, town or country) ____________________________
Diploma, degree or certificate: ____________________________
Special subject: ____________________________

From ____________________________
To ____________________________
School: ____________________________
Location: (city, town or country) ____________________________
Diploma, degree or certificate: ____________________________
Special subject: ____________________________

From ____________________________
To ____________________________
School: ____________________________
Location: (city, town or country) ____________________________
Diploma, degree or certificate: ____________________________
Special subject: ____________________________

Work Experience (Start with the most recent—your last job first)

From ____________________________
To ____________________________
Your job or position: ____________________________
Name of employer: ____________________________
Supervisor: ____________________________
Location: ____________________________
Your duties: ____________________________
Why did you leave?: ____________________________

Special licenses, training or certificates
(Examples: teacher training, registered nurse, electrician, carpenter, plumbing training, cooking school, commercial driver’s license)

References
(Someone you know professionally who can speak about your skills - NOT a friend)

From ____________________________
To ____________________________
Name: ____________________________
Workplace: ____________________________
Title: ____________________________
Address: ____________________________
Phone number: ____________________________
Email: ____________________________

General Tips

- Print N/A if you cannot answer a question.
- After you complete the application, always check your answers.
- All applications have deadlines: it means the last day to apply.
- You must turn in your application before the deadline date.
- Some parts of the application are for the company or office only.
- If you make a mistake, complete a new application.

Voicemail
Make sure you have a phone number where the employer can reach you directly (not a friend) and ensure the voicemail is set up so they can leave a message.
Follow Up On The Application

Fill out a JOB SEARCH RECORD (see appendix 1) every time you call about a job or fill out an application so you can keep track of the jobs you apply to.

Call employers after you turn in the application to check the status of your application!

Practice saying this until it is easy for you:

“Hello. My name is ______. I filled out an application one week ago. I am calling to check on the status of my application.”

Job Interview

After you fill out an application, the manager might call you to schedule an interview. You should ask for this information:

Always have a pen and paper by the phone. Write down all your appointments and interviews.

• “What time is the interview?”
• “What day?”
• “Where will the interview take place?”
• “Who will interview me?”
• REMEMBER TO SAY THANK YOU!!!

Congratulations! You have an interview for a job. You will learn about going for an interview, getting there, how to dress, the importance of body language, the kinds of questions you will answer, and the questions you can ask.

Make Plans to Get There

• Get the street address and location and write it down.
• Get directions on how to get there and where to park.
• Arrange for childcare. Do not bring children or anyone else with you.
• Make sure you are early or right on time. Do not be late! If you are just 5 minutes late to the interview, you may not get the job!

Dressing for an Interview

First impressions are very important. What you are wearing and how you look shows that you respect yourself and the person who interviews you.

• Make sure you wear clothing appropriate to the work.
• Always take a shower before the interview.
• If you are a man, shave and trim hair.
• Brush your teeth.
• Clean your fingernails.
• Be neat and clean.
• Do not chew gum or smoke.
• Wear a little or NO perfume or cologne.
Your Body Language

- Employers always pay attention to body language or what you do with your body in the interview.
- It is normal to be nervous at a job interview.
- Take a deep breath and try to relax.
- Even if you are nervous, act with confidence.
- Stand up straight and tall.
- Smile.
- Shake hands and wait to be asked to sit down.
- Look directly into your interviewer’s eyes.
- Answer questions with confidence in a clear voice.
- Think about your answers before you answer questions.
- Give answers that show that you have the qualities to do the job and you are eager to work.
- Speak in a voice that is easy to hear. (Do not speak softly.)
- Don’t ask about pay unless the interviewer asks you.
- Don’t put any of your personal items (hat, pocketbook, or bag) on the interviewer’s desk.

Practice Answering

Before the interview, start by answering these questions then practice them until they are easy for you.

Do you have experience? Or, tell me about your work experience.

Example response: Yes, I worked for 3 years in Iraq as an electrician.

Your answer:

Are you working now? (Respond yes or no. If yes, explain the situation.)

Can you work full-time? (Respond yes or no. If no, explain why.)

Do you have your own transportation? Or, do you have a driver’s license? (Respond yes or no.)

Can you work in the evening? Or, can you work the night shift? (Respond yes or no. If no, explain why.)

When can you start? Or, when are you available?

Example response: I can start next week.

Example response: I am available any day before 19:00.

Do you have references? (Tip: you should always answer yes. Make sure to write down who those references are and have their information available.)

What are your goals?

Example response: I would like to get experience working in Germany and continue to improve my language skills. Eventually I would like to get back into my field as an electrician.

Once you have mastered those, practice answering these questions too:

“Are you a team player?”

“Why do you want to work here?”

“Tell me about a time you had a conflict with someone and how you solved it.”

“Tell me about a problem you had recently and how you solved it.”

“Why should we hire you?”

“What are your strengths?” (Tip: complete using the personal qualities and skills list)
“What are your weaknesses?”

“What would your last supervisor say about you?”

Remember, these questions may be asked for an entry-level job. If you have an interview for a more technical or professional position, you should ensure you study some of the vocabulary associated with that field and consult with your employment counselor.

End of the Interview

At the end of the interview, always ask some questions. It shows that you care about the job. Write them down ahead of time so you won’t forget them.

Here are some sample questions:

- What are the job duties?
- When does the job start?
- What are the hours?
- Do I need any special clothing for this job?

The end of the interview is when the interviewer thanks you for coming in.

You can ask these questions:

- “When will you make your decision about the job?”
- “Can I call you to find out about your decision?”
- “Thank you.”
- Shake hands, smile, and be sure to make eye contact!

Follow Up On The Interview

Always send a thank you email to your interviewer within 24 hours of the interview. It makes a good impression.

If one week has passed and you have not received a phone call about the interview, you can email the employer to check the status.
Get Hired And Start Working

When you are offered a job, you will usually have to fill out a lot of paperwork and sign a contract. You will need to attend a training or orientation to learn more about the company and your job duties. Feel free to ask lots of questions to make sure you understand what is expected of you.

In order to keep the job, it is important to understand and follow your company code of conduct. Here are some areas to consider in the workplace:

**Dress Code**
Be sure to read the dress code for your work and come to work dressed appropriately.

**Gender**
Keep in mind that there is gender equality in the workplace. It is common for men to be supervised by women.

**Smoking and Alcohol**
Employees are not allowed to smoke or drink alcohol while at work. Check the policies. You may be allowed to smoke in designated areas while on an official work break.

**Time**
Time is very important!
- Always be EXACTLY on time
- If you are late to work, you could get fired
- You are required to keep track of your time at work
- You may need to “clock-in” or “punch in” every day

Start using a calendar and schedule your work days.
**Appendix 1**

**JOB SEARCH RECORD**

Client's Name: ________________________________________ Month/Year _____________________

*Please indicate the total amount of time it took you to complete each activity including any travel time.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Employer/ Business Name and Address</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
<th>Activity/ Action</th>
<th>Status/Comments</th>
<th>Total Time (hrs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Website:</td>
<td>1. Solicit application</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>Contact Name/ Number:</td>
<td>2. Submit application/CV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3. Interview</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4. Follow up</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>5. Job fair/open house</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Website:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>Contact Name/ Number:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Website:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>Contact Name/ Number:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Website:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>Contact Name/ Number:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Name:</td>
<td>Website:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Address:</td>
<td>Contact Name/ Number:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Client’s Signature: ____________________________________________________________

Date: ______/_____/______