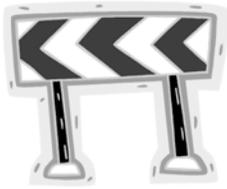


TOPIC 10A: OVERCOMING BARRIERS TO SUCCESSFUL EMPLOYMENT



bar-ri-er: (noun) *something that obstructs or separates, often by emphasizing differences*

Barriers....we will encounter a barrier every day! The nature of the barrier and the response which we choose defines the reality of the barrier. Is the barrier one that will be quickly removed by a decision or a risk, or will the barrier need further evaluation to determine the best resolution?

Habits are formed early in life. Good or bad, habits make you who you are. The key is to recognize them and manage them. If you know how to change your habits, even a small effort can bring big changes.

BREAKING BAD HABITS

1. Identify the negative results of your habit.

Write down the results of your bad habits. What is your bad habit costing you? Understanding what you are losing out on because of the bad habit, will motivate you to modify your behavior.

2. Understand the obvious benefits of getting rid of your habit.

Identify positive ways to meet the same needs that were filled by your bad habit. Practice these new habits!

3. Focus on your behavior.

Do you want to avoid the negatives of the habit or do you want to continue the habit?

4. Practice discipline in the moment.

If you are aware of the behavior that isn't good for you, be prepared to change it immediately!

5. Getting rid of a bad habit is learning good habits.

Remember to practice patience with yourself. If you fall back into the old habit, don't kick yourself around for it. Don't fall into self-pity and decide you can't beat the habit. Just get back to your healthy behavior.

6. Ask for support from friends and family.

When you talk to others, they might be able to provide advice or encouragement that you normally wouldn't get from yourself.

7. If your bad habit is an addiction (drugs, alcohol, etc.) it can be harder to break free from.

Seek professional help, addictions require medical assistance.



Being successful in our life's goals and responsibilities means not letting barriers, problems, or habits get in the way or become excuses. The same applies when looking for **employment**. A barrier to employment is anything that may be viewed by a potential employer as preventing you from being able to perform the duties of the position. Employers across the nation are looking for well-trained employees with strong and effective work habits and skills!

Attendance, work skills, life habits, attitude, physical presence, appearance, basic skills, ability to effectively communicate, and responsibility can be barriers to employment. What you must do is identify if there are issues or situations in your life that could be or are barriers that are preventing you from employment success. The next step is to know how to eliminate them in your job search and life. You must be able to manage your attitude, appropriate resources, and develop responses to prevent any problem or issue from becoming a hindrance to your work and career success.



Before you get started, place yourself in the position of the employer who wants to interview you for the open position. What are you looking for in the candidate sitting before you? In addition to appropriate responses, what else do you see and hear? An employer is listening and looking for potential barriers, too!

“The person who gets hired is not necessarily the one who can do the job best, but the one who knows the most about how to get hired!”

---Richard N. Bolles

To get started, take a quick assessment of your current status. Do you have a résumé and an appropriate outfit for your interview? Do you have transportation for the interview and to the job? Have you arranged reliable supervision for childcare or dependent care that will not interfere with your attendance? Are you ready to go to work tomorrow if a job were offered to you today?



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IDENTIFYING BARRIERS-REAL or PERCEIVED?

Let's take a look at some of the common barriers that job seekers face today. These can be **real or perceived**. In other words, real barriers are those that do, in fact, exist, but will require solutions to eliminate. Perceived barriers are those we "think" are keeping us from obtaining our goal of successful employment.

Potential Barrier Category		1	2	3
Your Education and Skills	High school diploma or GED			
	Some college/college degree			
	Education related to career interest(s)			
	Can use a computer for word processing and am familiar with the Internet			
	Effectively speak and write English and/or Bilingual			
	Transferable skills useful toward any employment (see transferable skills list)			
Your Work Experience	Work experience related to my career interest(s)			
	Credible work experience, more than two years at a single employer			
	Confirmation of solid work history (Attendance, team player, positive evaluations, etc.)			
	Background check not an issue			
	Positive work references available			
Your Personal Behavior	Easy-going personality			
	Positive attitude/ Avoiding gossip			
	Sensitive and aware of others			
	Polite and respectful of others, even if I disagree			
	Honest person who does the right thing			
	Dependable and trustworthy			
Your Health	Generally healthy person			
	Exercise, eat well to avoid health issues			
	Awareness of good personal hygiene, clean appearance			
	Rarely miss work due to poor health			
	Any disability I may have does not interfere with my work success (hearing, vision, etc.)			
Your Personal Life Responsibilities	Childcare/dependent care established			
	Transportation established			
	Domestic issues or problems are in the past and/or counseling for managing situations is in place			
Your Job Search Skills	Appropriate résumé with accurate information			
	Have all required documents to accurately complete an application for a job			
	Can complete an application			
	Able to use computer/internet to search for jobs and complete on-line applications			
	Open to coaching and suggestions for successful job search			
	Prepared for a job interview			
	Know appropriate dress for interview and have the clothes			

1 = Real Barrier

2 = Perceived Barrier

3 = No barrier

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