A job search skills curriculum for individuals with visual disabilities in Fiji

Mohammed Irshad Ali

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A JOB SEARCH SKILLS CURRICULUM FOR INDIVIDUALS
WITH VISUAL DISABILITIES IN FIJI

A Project
Presented to the
Faculty of
California State University,
San Bernardino

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts
in
Interdisciplinary Studies

by
Mohammed Irshad Ali
June 1993
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A Project
Presented to the Faculty of California State University, San Bernardino

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Approved by:

Dr. Ronald Pendleton, Chair, Education

Dr. Margaret Cooney, Rehabilitation Counseling

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ABSTRACT

The lack of current material on job development for individuals with visual disabilities in Fiji, necessitates a curriculum which will help students develop the skills required for a successful transition from school to the world of work. This project has been developed in response to such needs.

This project consists of the following components:

1. A literature review of job development strategies, the changing nature of work, the psychological and vocational implications of visual disabilities and career development.
2. An outline of methods and techniques for working with individuals with visual disabilities in Fiji.
3. A job seeking skills curriculum for students with visual disabilities.
4. Suggestions and guidelines for professional personnel in their relationships with blind individuals.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

With the rapid changes taking place in the world of work, the future outlook for individuals with visual disabilities in Fiji is greatly affected. For a majority of students in their final years of academic education, job seeking skills training and job development is a stepping stone of the career education process. Getting a job requires developing individual goals, seeking prospects, and developing job seeking skills that will lead to future advancement.

Suitable employment provides opportunities for growth and development, relieves the fear of dependency, and secures the individual's position within the family and the community. Developing skills to seek employment is an important component of the career education process. Without it job development and job placement does not become a reality.

Context of the Problem

There is concern that the present academic system in Fiji does not equip students with the basic skills
necessary for developing careers. Educators in Fiji often assume that graduating students possess the basic skills necessary to fully develop their careers. Such assumptions are not true and therefore, special educators in Fiji need to consider the incorporation of career and job development programs into their existing academic curricula.

The academic background of individuals with visual disabilities in Fiji is commendable. Through the integrated programs, individuals have been well prepared academically. However, the current special education academic curricula does not provide job or career development programs for individuals with disabilities.

Statement of the Problem

It is often seen that upon graduation from high schools, students with visual disabilities in Fiji are sent back from schools into villages and their communities. Such young persons often lack the skills and knowledge for seeking employment. They usually do not receive the critical training necessary for job readiness and career development. The unskilled person with visual disabilities often becomes dependent upon
the community and the family.

Upon graduation from high school, students who enter the Fiji Rehabilitation Center for placement services, often do not have the basic skills necessary to seek employment. Such students rely heavily upon placement services, expecting to have all the job search activities to be carried out by counselors at the center. This practice needs to be discouraged, and individuals should be given the opportunity to develop job search skills as early as possible.

**Significance of the Project**

The purpose of this project was to develop a job seeking skills curriculum to be implemented within special education programs in Fiji. The lack of current material on job seeking skills and job development needs for students in Fiji, necessitates a curriculum which will help students develop the skills required for a successful transition from school to the world of work. This curriculum was developed in response to such needs, and to offer a functional teaching curriculum through which job search skills and job development can be taught effectively.

This curriculum was developed as a model for
individuals with visual disabilities due to the high incidence of visual disorders in Fiji and the surrounding South Pacific region. However, various aspects of this curriculum can be adapted for use with other disability areas.

Objectives of the Study

This project will provide special education teachers and counselors in Fiji with a job seeking skills training curriculum which can be used as a model in various academic programs. This model will assist students with visual disabilities in both job placement and career development.

Definitions

**Attitude** - the ability to understand meanings, ideas, information and to use them effectively.

**Blindness** - visual acuity for distance vision of 20/200 or less in the better eye with the best possible correctional field vision of no greater than 20 degrees.

**Braille** - the tactile language system used by individuals with blindness.

**Career Education** - the total development of a student
in learning about and preparing for work.

**Career Education Plan** - an assessment and planning tool designed for use within a structured guidance system for a student's personal career development.

**Career Planning** - gathering information about ourselves and about occupations; estimating the probable outcomes of various courses of action, and finally choosing alternatives that we find attractive and possible.

**Career Counseling** - all services and activities in an institution which assist individuals make career decisions.

**Counselor** - one who helps students to understand themselves and their relationships with others.

**Counseling** - all the personal contacts students have with individuals who in personal interviews try to understand and help them.

**Disability** - impairment or functional limitation in one or more bodily systems.

**Employer Expectations** - the attitude and expectations of employers towards persons with disabilities.

**Equal Opportunity** - every person has a fair chance to become educated and seek employment.

**Interests** - likes and dislikes of students
Leisure - activity that is not required but is done for enjoyment.

Mobility - the ability to move freely in an environment with or without the use of assistive devices.

Job - a particular position a person holds or the particular kind of work done for pay in that position.

Job Development - the activities carried out by teachers, counselors, and the student to locate suitable employment.

Job Leads - any publication or information which leads to a prospective employment position.

Job Search Skills - individual skills and abilities essential for seeking employment.

Occupation - the kind of activity needed to perform work tasks. The tasks involved are situation to situation.

Sheltered Workshop - a place where employment is provided for individuals with disabilities.

Sighted Guide - assisting a person with a visual disability to move within an environment.

Supported Employment - placing a person in employment and providing support services for a period of time.

Transition - the process of preparing school-age youth


and minimum time.

performs specific visual tasks with ease, comfort,

Visual Efficiency - the degree to which a person

vision after the onset of the visual disability.

Visual Functioning - how people use the remaining

disease, or injury to the eye.

the visual accommodation due to myopia, myopia,
peripheral vision, color vision, and reduction in central vision.

Visual Disability - any reduction in central vision

visual accommodation due to myopia, myopia,

Visual Functioning - how people use the remaining

Visual Disability - any reduction in central vision

the visual accommodation due to myopia, myopia,

Visual Functioning - how people use the remaining

Visual Disability - any reduction in central vision

Values - individual needs and satisfactions associated

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Teaching/Learning Process - the prescriptive method by

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Teaching/Learning Process - the prescriptive method by

specific vocational preparation needed for a person

Training Time - the amount of general education and

Training Time - the amount of general education and

Training Time - the amount of general education and

Transition Workshops - a training center which

Transition Workshops - a training center which

Transition Workshops - a training center which

for employment.

for employment.

for employment.
Vocation - a broader scope of occupation. It is used to convey a sense of life mission or purpose.

Vocational Skills - the skills an individual needs for the performance of an occupation.

Vocational Training - the specific training required for a person to acquire the knowledge and skills of a particular occupation.

Work - activity that is carried out for which payment is received.

Assumptions

It is assumed that the inclusion of a job skills curricula within the academic program of special education in Fiji will assist individuals with visual disabilities seek employment and develop their careers successfully. The success of this curriculum depends upon its use by teachers and counselors.
Limitations

This study is limited by:
1. The lack of current literature on labor market trends in Fiji.
2. The rapidly changing nature of technology and the changing views of how best to apply the use of technology in classroom situations.

Methodology

First, current literature was reviewed in the areas of career education, job development techniques, the changing nature of work, and the effects of visual disabilities on individuals. Next, discussions were held with counselors, and personnel involved with the rehabilitation of individuals with visual disabilities.

The visitations, and discussions provided information that helped determine the requirements for job seeking skills training and job development activities. The faculty members at California State University, San Bernardino, were an invaluable aid in organizing my personal experiences as a counselor for this population in Fiji, 1979-1991, and designing a curriculum based within the context of Fiji's socio-
economic and educational system.

Location of Fiji and the Educational setting

The Fiji Islands are a group of islands in the South Pacific with a population of approximately 780,000 (1979 census). The Fiji archipelago lies within the fringe of the tropics and straddle the 180th meridian, approximately 15 and 22 degrees south, and 1,100 miles south of the equator. Its three hundred islands spread over 18,333 square kilometers of the South Pacific Ocean. Approximately 100 of these islands are inhabited with population concentration being on Viti Levu which is the largest island.

The educational establishments for individuals with disabilities are mostly located around Viti Levu and the capital city - Suva. The Fiji Rehabilitation Center which is located in Suva, is the only establishment that provides job training and placement services for individuals with disabilities. Although special education services throughout the country provide excellent academic training, they do not offer job seeking skills training to such students.
Description of the Curriculum

This curriculum offers specific information for teachers and counselors who assist individuals with visual disabilities preparing to seek employment. The information on evaluating the labor market, and the world of work, together with the methods and techniques for selecting a job will help individuals make career choices and seek employment in a wise and orderly manner. It will help establish contacts in the community, the business world, and understand the mechanics of developing a career.

For those who lose their sight in adulthood, the information on effects of blindness in planning for employment will assist in the job development process. The activities and suggestions can be covered in formal and informal situations. Teachers may find it feasible to have an area covered in a social science class, while others can be covered in guidance situations or extracurricular activities. The activities and suggestions will help students share their experiences with others, identify community resources, and contribute towards job development activities.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature for this project consists of the following:

1. Public reactions to visual disabilities.
2. Factors influencing occupational choice of individuals with visual disabilities in Fiji.
3. Strategies for individuals with visual disabilities to cope with career planning.
4. An overview of labor market trends in Fiji.

Public Reactions to Visual Disabilities

A part of the process of adjustment to the loss of sight includes the ability to cope with the reactions of the public to the disability. Individuals must realize the attitude of the public and how it negates the adjustment process.

A review of current literature reveals the universal concern among educators with the visually disabled person's difficulty in managing with the negative attitudes of the general public (Goffman, 1974 and Scott 1969). Roberts' (1973) view of the effects of attitudes is typical: "There is the commonly held view
of blind people being helpless, resigned, melancholy, sexually sterile, etc." (p.52). He goes on to describe the "strong tendency" of most blind people to comply with social stereotyping.

Tuttle (1984) observed the impact of visual disabilities and the attitude of the general public. He maintained that:

A blind person's self-esteem is also affected by the recognition that he is not totally self-sufficient, that he is dependent on the sighted to meet some of his needs even with the best adaptive behaviors and coping skills. The dependency needs of the blind are more visible than the dependency needs of the sighted, and as a result, most members of society tend to share the opinion that persons with visual disabilities are more dependent and less worthy (p.19).

Individuals who have been thoroughly trained, learn to reduce the effects of the disability. However, it may still be necessary to convince people that a person with a visual disability has become an independent, capable person. This difficulty arises
because of cultural beliefs which regard blindness in particular as an incapacitating disability. The complex nature of the customs and traditions of various ethnic groups in Fiji further negates the adjustment process.

The cultural ethics of the Fijian society places great emphasis on the ability to see. The loss of vision is perceived to create helplessness. People react sympathetically towards persons with visual disabilities. These attitudes restrict the developmental potential of individuals with disabilities; a major obstacle to those seeking employment and a respectful place within the community.

To prove one's identity and overcome the fears and apprehensions of one's society, an individual needs to master the many chores of surviving in a competitive world. An important key therefore, is the mastery of skills and techniques, and the awareness of the forces that govern our multi-cultural society.

An amplification of this belief was made by Harrington (1982), in his book, Handbook of Career Planning for Special Needs Students:

In considering the impact of legal blindness
on the adolescent and the young adult, the factors of education, social and recreational influences, and the attitudes of the family must undergo a certain degree of scrutiny. With the approach of adulthood these factors take on a greater significance for the visually impaired concerning the future (p.133).

The significance of participation in social and cultural gatherings is an important aspect of the Fijian culture. In many ways visual disabilities may interfere with recreation and social activities. Recognizing this fact, some thought should be given to how disadvantages can be compensated for or overcome.

Social events not only provide a means for interaction, but also recognition within the cultural structure of Fiji's various ethnic groups. Developing good public relations and communicating effectively will help people realize that a person with a visual disability is the same as any one else.

Factors Influencing Occupational Choice of Individuals with Visual Disabilities in Fiji.
Numerous studies have been carried out on how careers are developed. Zunker (1986), cited the theories of a number of social psychologists such as Holland, Ginzberg, Gelatt, and Super, and illustrated the processes that occur in career development. Implicit in these theories is the way careers are most often measured.

The first measurement is through which men and women evaluate themselves by taking into account individual goals and achievements. The second measurement is used by friends, relatives, and the community. The values of various ethnic groups in Fiji establish guidelines for determining the status of individuals in occupations, businesses, and the community.

Communities differ in their judgement of values, for what may be considered successful by one group may not be considered a noteworthy achievement by another. Within the extended family system in Fiji, each member must attain self-respect and display personal contributions so that they can be identified. They must also feel that their contributions are of some value to both family and the community.

The subject of occupational choice should be
explored by each student and discussed with teachers and guidance counselors. Numerous writers have developed theories regarding how occupational choices are made. An understanding of some of these theories will help clarify some of the most common problems of students.

One theory rests on the belief that students form a picture in their mind of the kind of person they would like to be. Thomson (1973) stated:

Crystalization of a vocational preference is a developmental task encountered during the fourteen-to eighteen year period. During these early and middle adolescent years, the teenager is expected to formulate ideas as to appropriate fields and levels of work. He is also expected to formulate concepts about himself and occupations that will enable him to commit himself to a type of education or training that will lead to some partially specified occupation (p.206).

This takes into account the body image and the need for status. For example, students who view themselves...
as super athletes, may place too much emphasis on athletic achievement to gain status. Students who picture themselves in service occupations, may not strive hard enough to develop their potentials to the maximum possible extent. Students who base their decisions on their mental picture, should not heed the advice and suggestions of others. By merely exploring on their own, the chances of real success are reduced because they do not explore the subject of occupational choice with an open mind.

The sociologist, Theodore Caplow (1962), stated that in many instances occupational choices are based on error and accident. Such choices frequently occur because people who are looking for jobs are often quick to accept whatever jobs are available. After some experience has been acquired, there is a tendency for these workers to stay on the job. Often employers are quick to encourage the continued use of the same skills due to economic reasons.

Caplow, further indicated that workers with family responsibilities often find it impractical to lose time from work or discontinue work altogether to learn skills to enter another occupation. It is through chance then, and sometimes without thorough appraisal
of their aptitudes, workers are placed into occupations for which they are not suited for, and in which they find very little satisfaction.

The cultural influences of the various ethnic groups in Fiji, and the socio-economic status of the family have a profound influence on occupational choice and career development. Many communities consider structured training or professional employment unimportant. Students from such communities will often have little or no encouragement to climb to a higher level, or to pursue further training.

Many communities in Fiji place greater importance on cultural activities. This is rather time consuming and students are often encouraged to participate. It is therefore, difficult for students to break from tradition, separate from friends and pursue a career path which does not conform to the socio-economic status of the community. It is often seen that such students resist structured training.

Students who come from families with lower socio-economic status, are often encouraged to seek employment at an early age so as to contribute towards the welfare of the family. Usually such students are deprived of training opportunities and seek jobs below
their level of abilities therefore, lacking in opportunities to develop their potentials fully.

A major problem among low income families is the lack of financial assistance for those family members wishing to pursue a career path that require years of education. This is considered as a financial burden, therefore, individuals are forced into service occupations; devoid of the possibility to develop their potentials fully.

Within such a system, students suffer from a lack of motivation to work towards higher goals. Such students do not have the benefit of a close contact with professional people. Without proper influences and guidance, it is understandable why many students do not attain a higher level of achievement. They simply lack the motivation for achievement and are unaware of their own potentials.

**Strategies for Individuals with Visual Disabilities to Cope with Career Planning**

Career planning can be a difficult process for young adults. It is important for counselors and teachers to help students evaluate both their aptitudes and the choice of occupations. Careers do not just
happen, they are a result of hard work and careful planning. Things that are worthwhile in life usually require preparation and motivation to do what is necessary to achieve goals. An important information for this consideration was posed by Shertzer (1981):

A point stressed in many theories is that career development is a long-range, gradual process. It involves acquiring information about the self, about occupations, and trends. Recognizing that the career choice process takes time should be helpful to you because too many people think, and will try to make you think, that it can be condensed into a single afternoon (p.269).

Career development, then defined in its simplest form is the total experiences which encompass the pursuit of an occupation. It is a journey through one's lifetime. This journey will consist of many phases for the young adult. It begins with the choice of an occupation. It will include such important factors as education, social and occupational development. It is therefore, never too early or to late to begin
planning towards goals that will add happiness to a successful life.

Studies carried out by numerous social psychologists emphasize the importance of thorough education for success in careers. Education is a strong determinant of the career path an individual decides to take. Securing adequate and appropriate education is important. There is no substitute for thorough skills of mathematics, communications, arts, and the sciences which form the basis of academic education.

Students who have successfully completed high school education usually have broader opportunities for further training and job placement. Those who pursue further education will probably find better career prospects. The acquisition of complex thought process, communicating with others, and an awareness of individual roles within the community are also part of the education process. The mastery of these skills will add to the career prospects of each individual.

Training is essential for the successful practice of an occupation. On this consideration, Hodsun (1992) cited Chamot and Bagot who stated: "The demand for additional training results from three primary factors: electronic technologies, increased competition, and the
spread of innovative approaches to production" p.275).

The advances in technology today, and the changing nature of work, have led to the need for specialist skills. With the changing technology, many occupations require specialist skills. Training, practice, and the ability to perform tasks is important. Within the rapid expansion of Fiji's industries, few jobs remain for those who lack the skills and necessary qualifications.

Teachers need to be aware of family situations and encourage family support during the career development process. Often this can be accomplished by involving parents in the counseling sessions and discussing the choice of the proposed career prior to plan implementation. When parents are involved, the teacher has the opportunity to assess the career choice as it impacts the entire family. The support of the entire family improves the chances of career success.

Discussions with friends and family members will provide ideas and encouragement.

An individual when considering the reasons for desiring work of a specific type should receive guidance and the opportunity to explore a number of work possibilities. A job which offers career advancement and promotes the status of an individual
should be most desirable. Means and Farley (1991) in a pilot study cited Roessler, Hinman, and Lewis:

Additionally, individuals seeking employment need skills to obtain a job. Indeed, the abundance of how-to-do-it paperbacks on the market suggests that inadequate job-finding skills may be fairly common in the general population (p.69).

Means (1991) further cited Clark and Johnson:

In the case of rehabilitation clients, who often have to contend with handicaps such as limited education and work experience in addition to diagnosed disabilities, the evidence suggest that the lack of job-seeking skills is indeed prevalent (p.69).

The job seeking skills, including the filling out of applications, effective communication, interview techniques, and understanding the world of work are important. The career preparation stage in high schools requires intensive self-awareness exploration,
understanding of human interests, attitudes, and the motives which regulate the world of work. An important goal is to help students crystalize self-concepts. Zunker (1986) further amplified this process:

Career education infusion modules are designed to help students become more aware of their aptitudes, interests, values, and lifestyle preferences. The development of planning skills for future educational and vocational choices also involves a multitude of learning activities and guidance programs. Decision making skills and knowledge of job placement are key factors to emphasize in career-education infusion (p.196).

When planning for a career it is important for students to develop a realistic appraisal of their skills, level of education, and future goals. Individuals need to ascertain their position relative to education, experiences, and the values imposed by the particular community to which they belong. Students need to view their progress and set sights on goals ahead.
In making a choice, a great deal of thought, planning, and research should be carried out. Bauman and Yoder (1962) in their book, Placing the Blind and Visually Handicapped in Professional Occupations summarized the basic requirements a student should have when pursuing a particular occupation:

1. The opportunities available and the alternatives to a particular occupation.
2. The student should know how to obtain information and the data available.
3. Consider the influences of the family, friends, and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of these influences.
4. Effectively utilize the information provided by teachers and make an appraisal of themselves, taking into account their strengths and weaknesses.
5. Be confident with the choice and show willingness to undertake training.
6. Evaluate the time required to prepare for the selected occupation, and the costs involved in obtaining the training (p.28-32).

In choosing an occupation, students with visual
disabilities in Fiji strongly rely on occupations that have been successfully practiced by other visually disabled individuals in open employment. For many years this was considered to be a wise and logical approach to occupational choice. Today, however, this approach is unwise and is no longer necessary as individuals with visual disabilities have the opportunity to venture into many occupations that would not have been possible in the past.

The important factor to consider when choosing an occupation is that visual disabilities must be considered in relation to the way it affects each individual and the performance of an occupation. To determine whether an occupation is suitable, a study must be made of the demands of the job, determine whether sight is required for the job, and how other senses such as touch or hearing can be substituted in some way.

It is difficult to know the number of occupations that cannot be performed by individuals with visual disabilities. On this consideration, Roberts (1973) mentioned: "Although there are specific jobs which eliminate people with visual disabilities, there are activities associated with most occupations that can be
performed efficiently" (p. 86). Individuals must realize the limitations imposed by visual disabilities and have realistic appraisal of their functional abilities.

Jobs that require the use of some equipment must be thoroughly analyzed. Information must be gathered to find out the types of skills required, the nature of the work, and how adjustments to furniture or equipment will enable people with visual disabilities perform the particular activity.

An Overview of the Labor Market Trends in Fiji

The trends in the labor market largely determine the type of workers required for the workforce. Jobs may become obsolete due to automation or change in the way the work is done. These changes create a demand for workers with skills of one kind or another and account for the variations that occur in the composition of the workforce.

The work done by thousands of people represents many kinds of activities. The changing workforce and the nature of work have created endless variety of activities and job descriptions. The routines and assignments of individual workers within a particular
occupation may vary from one organization to another. Kiernan (1992) stated that, "industries constantly face challenges of matching the worker to the job and assuring that an optimal fit is maintained over time" (p.57). Although, a specific job allows workers to perform the duties assigned, it may at the same time be flexible enough to allow for the development of additional skills.

Employment specialist, Hoyt (1988) identified the changes in the composition of the workforce. "There are constantly new kinds of jobs in the labor market. Most of these require education, skills, and experience" (p.33). Positions may be filled by other people from employers who have given workers the necessary training and qualifications. New jobs may also be filled by workers entering the workforce for the first time.

The mandatory retirement of workers at the age of 55 years in Fiji, the death of workers, or those who leave the workforce for other reasons, creates new jobs. Often those who retire have reached a point at which their skills have been well developed. The worker next in line may be appointed to replace the person retiring. Workers often move up to higher ranks from job to job, gaining experience and skills. More often,
a vacancy that occurs in such a situation will occur at a lower level.

Employers usually set high standards when seeking new employees. It is understandable that applicants do not always meet the standards employers establish. However, in order to fill vacancies, employers are quite often willing to compromise with respect to individual qualifications and experiences.

Hoyt (1988) stated: "Individuals with disabilities must also compete in the labor market. Such individuals are often at a disadvantage when competing for the labor market" (p.36). Therefore, it is important for individuals with disabilities to possess a standard of qualification that is equal or superior to those of their sighted peers.

The present legislation in Fiji does not regulate the hiring practices of employers, nor does it provide support services and protection for workers with disabilities in the workforce. Each employer will ultimately form his own judgement. It is likely that employers favor well-qualified applicants for a job than one who has minimum qualifications.

Perhaps more than any other factor, the technological advances today have considerably changed
the composition of the workforce. Many occupations are being replaced by machines. Miller (1990) stated: "Operating and maintaining machines requires operators and technicians with appropriate knowledge and skills" (p.36). Many machines are so complex that workers require specialized training programs, a factor to be considered by prospective workers and training institutions.

The nature of work in Fiji has changed dramatically over the past decade or so. This is particularly due to modernization, industrialization, and foreign investment. This in turn has created a higher demand for white collar jobs. On the other hand, there has been a decrease in the demand for jobs requiring menial skill.

Unemployed workers who have left particular occupations for various reasons find securing new employment a challenge. There are also those who are looking for specific jobs and are willing to wait until a suitable vacancy occurs. Others may be waiting for a vacancy within the vicinity of their homes providing the working arrangements are satisfactory. There are also those who have lost their jobs due to closure of organizations, or demographic changes.
CHAPTER III

ANALYSIS, DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Analysis

The review of literature in this project discussed some of the basic concepts and issues in relation to job search skills for persons with visual disabilities. It is an essential component of the career development process, and deserves individual attention in order to facilitate special services for this population.

Developing skills that persons with visual disabilities require to compete in a seeing world is time consuming and it requires a structured program of instruction. The onset of visual disabilities causes the loss of a number of skills which must be regained within a sufficient time frame. Organization is the key to effective skills training and developing work attitudes. The time spent on training program must be used to full advantage.

When planning for a particular occupation, an individual's strengths, abilities, interests, and aptitudes must be evaluated. Advance planning is important; consultations must be held with others, and
education is of prime importance. Students must be encouraged to develop a career plan, understand the world of work, labor market trends, the nature of various occupations and the mechanics of career development.

Developing wholesome attitudes towards work, considering the reasons for wanting to enter a specific occupation and understanding how jobs are created are important. Assessing the labor market and planning towards goals will help direct individuals towards work of specialized nature.

A teacher's role in career development involves recognizing the demands of the labor market, being aware of the hiring criteria, and assisting students in making occupational choices. This support will help students to recognize their needs and work towards goals that will lead to career success.

Occupational choices are influenced by many forces: the individual's motivation, interests, as well as the cultural and economic influences of the community. A student needs to be at least aware of the nature of the influences which affect choices, explore the options available, and discuss their needs with teachers and professionals.
Individual and group guidance needs to be offered to assist students in learning as much as possible about specific career plans. General information must be provided so that students can investigate their occupational choice with little assistance. A typical high school program needs to include job search strategies, interview skills training and instructions on writing resumes.

Suggestions for job search strategies were presented as a reminder to teachers and counselors to attend closely to the needs of students, and to make adaptations where necessary. Educators should specially be aware of the abundance of community resources which can be effectively utilized to provide support services. Developing a broad support base through community support, analyzing the labor market, and assisting individuals to interact with the community are important aspects of career development.

In view of how careers develop, psychological, social, and educational accomplishments influence career development. General awareness of these influences will help students make appropriate career choices.
Discussion

During career planning teachers need to direct services towards placing students into new occupations or training programs. Merely providing students with vocational assessment does not meet the ethical obligations of teachers. It is critical that teachers promote job search activities by calling on local businesses, training institutions, identifying openings, and scheduling interviews when possible.

Students need to develop positive attitudes towards work. Numerous social psychologists have observed the changing relationship between man and work today. Many people in Fiji attach a great deal of value to the title of a position or the nature of the work done. Students preparing to enter the world of work should be given the opportunity to attain goals that will help develop their potentials and realize the value of work.

Vision plays an important role in determining the career path of an individual. People react in different ways to the loss of vision. A person who loses sight gradually will react differently to one who has traumatic loss. More often the individual will learn through trial and error or as result of specialized training.
Developing skills to compete in a sighted world takes time. For individuals with congenital blindness, the training program must include development of independence skills at the earliest possible time. For those individuals who lose their sight during later years, sufficient time must be allowed for adjustment to the disability in order to regain independence. In order to minimize the loss of time caused by the onset of the disability, counseling needs to be secured as early as possible. Careful examination of individual study habits, work attitudes, relationship with others and the acceptance of the resulting handicaps will help determine whether one can find means to improving adjustments to career readiness.

There are major areas of training which individuals can devote time themselves in order to adjust to the problems imposed by visual disabilities. Independent mobility skills and effective communication are two of the most important skills required for effective job performance.

The development of mobility skills will help individuals travel safely in familiar and unfamiliar surroundings. Devices such as the long cane and new electronic devices will help develop independence.
Those with partial vision must learn to utilize their residual vision to advantage. Often such individuals learn to travel independently with adaptive visual aids. Another mode of travel often used is the human guide. Relying on human guides should be a temporary measure. Over-dependence on human guides often causes the loss of independent mobility skills.

Effective communication involves a number of skills vital for the functioning of an individual in any occupation. Reading is a vital area in which individuals with visual disabilities need to look for substitutes. Technology today has produced numerous devices which can be adapted for use by individuals with visual disabilities.

The goal of job development is to assist students in choosing a suitable occupation. An occupation which utilizes their abilities, offers job satisfaction, security, and with opportunities for advancement should be considered most appropriate.

It is also important that students realize the nature of the many influences and evaluate the appropriateness of their occupational choice. To help students develop awareness of various occupations, teachers need to provide good occupational literature,
arrange visits to places of employment and provide insight into the demands and requirements of various occupations.

Teachers have a highly respected status within the Fijian society. They are considered as leaders in the community. They play an important role in determining the direction an individual may take. Their ability to disseminate information and counsel students will bring the realities of work into the classroom. The suggestions of teachers, textbook stories, review of literature or daily publications, and the general conversation which occurs are ways to implant ideas in the minds of students.

Conclusion

The study attempted to provide information concerning the development of a job seeking skills and job development program within special education services in Fiji. The review indicates that academic instruction should be directed towards developing these skills as part of the career education process.

Implementing effective job seeking skills program requires greater involvement from parents, community agencies and industries, a by coordinating and
integrating services to meet each student's career development needs. The special education teacher must provide specific classroom instruction for students with specific needs. Tutoring and monitoring student progress is required of special education personnel.

The role of the family was also reviewed. The family can also contribute to the students learning if they receive necessary guidance and support from the school personnel. The home is a fertile ground for teaching social and occupational skills. Parents can assist their children by providing hands-on experiences, developing career awareness, teaching specific skills and providing a secure environment where self-confidence and independence can be developed.

The school-community relationship was seen to enhance the implementation of a meaningful job seeking skills curriculum for individuals with disabilities. Seeking employment requires the effective use of community resources for students to adequately explore and be prepared for employment.
Recommendations

1. The integration of a job search skills program into the academic curricula is strongly recommended.

2. The job search skills training be recognized as an integral part of the career education process.

3. Students should be prompted to establish a career plan, develop the skills to evaluate the labor market, and utilize community resources.

4. Teachers and counselors need to act as monitors in assessing student needs and evaluating individual progress.

5. Dissemination of occupational information to students in a manner that is meaningful.

6. A teacher's role as a counselor, a consultant and a resource person requires integrating relevant career material into instructional programs.

7. Liaison between school and community must be maintained because career education programs require community participation and cooperation.

8. Organizing on-site visits to local industries, to have speakers from the community are responsibilities of teachers and counselors.

9. As the educational background of students is expected to rise, some measure of reform should be
implemented in the Fiji special education program to allocate more resources to career education programs.

10. A program to increase the public awareness of visual disabilities is suggested.

11. Teacher and counselor preparation is essential for the provision of a high quality of services in a wide variety of settings.

12. Increased efforts by government and industries in the allocation of resources for career educational programs.

13. Increased efforts by governmental, industrial and educational personnel to share the responsibilities for training individuals with disabilities.

14. Schools need to develop a work experience program for this population.

15. Increase advocacy groups to seek legislation for the provision of equal opportunities for all individuals with disabilities in Fiji.
CHAPTER IV

JOB SEARCH SKILLS CURRICULUM

Guidelines for Teachers and Counselors

Introduction

The purpose of this curriculum is to allow teachers and counselors to assist students develop job search skills in preparation for the world of work. This curriculum offers teachers and counselors of individuals with visual disabilities to look ahead into future work, labor market trends, and utilize community resources. It will assist individuals with visual disabilities to develop techniques for seeking employment.

The activities and suggestions can be covered in formal and informal situations. Teachers may find it feasible to integrate the program with social science activities or other extracurricular activities. Students will have the opportunity to share their experiences with others, and contribute towards job search activities.

The success of this curriculum depends upon teachers and counselors using the material in a productive manner. Teachers in Fiji have been too reluctant to embrace a career education program, believing that their task is to teach academic subjects only. Often students leave the educational system and become dissatisfied with their own career development. However, if attention is focused on how much
attention youth actually receive in meeting their needs, students graduating from the educational system will be better equipped to adjust to our rapidly changing world.

Objectives

1. Students will identify work values and make decisions critical to career choice.
2. Students will be able to identify personal skills and characteristics in relation to career choice.
3. Students will develop skills in identifying prospective employment positions.
UNIT I: COMMUNITY RESOURCES IN FIJI

Resources in the community are available to everyone, and assist in job development, and the planning of careers. For students, the first resource is the school. Outside the school, there are established community resources which must be explored and utilized effectively.

Services within the School

Within the school, students will find some information to enable them locate suitable employment or secure additional training. Most schools in Fiji do not have the services of guidance counselors. Therefore, students rely upon librarians, and teachers who can assist in locating occupational literature, contacting employers, community leaders, or union personal and other professionals to share the knowledge of the world of work.

Vocational Institutions and Employment Agencies

In most districts there are private and government run vocational institutions which offer a number of services which students may wish to pursue with the assistance of their teachers.
Government institutions often recruit students for their training programs towards the end of the school year. Although they do not offer job placement services, they provide excellent career counselling for students. Teachers must take the initiative to invite personnel from these institutions such as the Fiji Institute of Technology, the Fiji National Training Council, and colleges in various districts. Personnel from these institutions have the training and experience, and are aware of the academic and practical requirements of their occupations. Discussions on a first hand basis provides students with an opportunity to evaluate their skills, aptitudes and interests.

Most districts in Fiji have private vocational schools which are licensed by the government. They hire their own staff and operate on the fees they collect through providing training. A number of private schools offer job placement services.

There are also private employment agencies in most towns and cities which offer job placement services. Many agencies have contracts with employers, and their services are paid for by employers. These agencies usually advertise in newspapers and elsewhere to locate their clientele. A student must be willing to
contact such agencies and explore their services.

The exact procedure for getting a job through a private employment agency may vary. Some agencies charge a registration fee while others do not. All private employment agencies use contracts signed by the job seeker. These contracts spell out in some detail the terms and conditions under which the agency will work on behalf of the applicant. Depending on the terms of the contract, it may not be necessary to pay the agency the full amount of their fees at once; payment may extend over a period of time. Those interested in registering with an agency must feel free to inquire about their services. There is no obligation unless a contract is signed and a job is accepted.

Over the years, the attitudes of employment and training institution personnel towards individuals with visual disabilities have improved considerably. In general, however, employment interviewers are not qualified to provide placement services for individuals with disabilities. Applications from individuals are often discouraged, since placing a person with visual disability is seen as a possible risk factor and undue responsibility on their part.
Although individuals are encouraged to utilize all possible community resources, they should not be discouraged if their applications do not result in immediate placement. Often, students with disabilities are referred to a placement counselor at the Fiji Rehabilitation Center. Counselors are trained in the best methods of how to serve people with disabilities. They spend their time in contacting employers, and training institutions for the purpose of providing rehabilitation services for individuals with disabilities.

Telephone Directories

Telephone directories are useful for those seeking employment. The directory lists the numbers and addresses of prospective employers throughout the country. It is useful in selecting employers, learning of their location, and the type of business they have.

The yellow pages of the directory helps identify employers who specialize in a type of work for which a student may be qualified. Choosing a heading, a student may write or telephone a number of employers to seek information on prospects for training and employment.
Advertisements

Most newspapers have a classified section for employment advertisements. These advertisements are usually classified as "situations vacant" or "trainees wanted." It is a good idea to make a habit of checking the classified section of local newspapers when searching for a job or training prospects.

Magazines such as the Pacific Islands Monthly, usually advertise prospective employment and trainee positions. Publications of the Fiji Government - The Royal Fiji Gazette, and the newsletters of the Fiji National Training Council, usually advertise positions within government departments.

Religious and Charitable Organizations

In most districts there are religious and charitable organizations which offer services that may be of help to those planning a career. These are usually listed in the telephone directory under the heading of Social Service Organizations. The Young Men's Christian Organization (YMCA), and the Young Women's Christian Association (YWCA) offer assistance in securing employment, offer job seeking skills courses, and have social and recreational activities.
Apart from assisting people in need, the Salvation Army, and the various religious organizations assist people in locating particular services they need. These organizations offer career counselling and support employment opportunities for young people.

It is important for students to locate all community resources and to seek help when needed. Individuals with visual disabilities will need help in planning their education, securing specialized training and obtaining job placement.

**Family and Friends**

It is common for people to seek assistance from family members and friends. Students should not feel reluctant to discuss the subject of job-search with family members and friends. It is better to talk individually, and at the right time. It is important to be selective in information gathering; choosing information that is pertinent and discarding others. A large number of workers have applied for positions as the result of influence or conversations with friends, relatives and neighbors.

Almost everyone can think of personal contacts such as teachers, fellow church members, friends, or those
who take particular interest in the progress of individuals. Students must approach people who they think may be in a good position to introduce them to employers or suitable positions. It is only polite for students to thank anyone who has worked on their behalf, whether or not such effort has resulted in locating a definite position.

**Analyzing Occupational Data**

Before students have narrowed the choice to one or two occupations, they should be encouraged to scan through a wide selection of occupational information. Having decided on a particular occupation, more thorough search should be carried out to define the occupation, training and education requirements, opportunities for career advancement, the additional qualifications employers look for, and where most jobs are located.

Many occupations require that workers live a particular part of the country. Those interested in employment or training with government departments will be expected to live near larger towns and cities. Vacancies offered in other districts may require relocation. Individuals must be prepared to take
advantage of these opportunities, and show the willingness to relocate.

Summary

After consulting teachers, workers, employers, and reviewing literature pertaining to an occupation, a person must consider how it would be possible to perform duties that normally require the use of sight. There are some basic guidelines to follow whereby a person with visual disabilities may be able to work effectively in a specific occupation.

First of all a person should concentrate on how he or she as an individual would do the job. Some individuals have enough residual vision which must be utilized effectively. Others may use braille or electronic devices, and still others may have individual skills which can be substituted for sight. Since individuals differ, the individual approach is the most effective.

In addition to working out the task, an individual will need to be informed about tools and devices required for the job. Information on both how they are generally used and how they may be adapted to individual needs, will help in the planning process.
After obtaining all the available information in relation to an occupation, students should be encouraged to review the data carefully. They may also submit the information to a counselor for comments. By doing so matters which may not have come to the attention of the student can be clarified so as to improve the value of the investigation.

When students apply to the Fiji Rehabilitation Center for services, the results of the investigation will assist counselors in planning a training program. If students have followed a course of careful planning and know their strengths and weaknesses, it is likely that the choice of the occupation will be accepted. On the other hand students who have unrealistic goals, or have not planned carefully will find it necessary to modify their goals with the help of a counselor.
Developing Work Values

Activity 1.1

The quotations listed below express feelings that people have about work. Select three that have the most meaning for you. Jot them down according to the order of preference. Write down your thoughts and feelings about them, and discuss them in groups.

1. "Work is happiness and contentment." - Helen Keller
2. "Work is a means by which an individual makes a living." - Shertzer
3. "Most of us want to make a living, but we also want to work at something that gives meaning to our lives." - Shertzer
4. "Work sometimes means that we have to do what we would never freely choose to do." - Unknown
5. "Find a job that makes you happy, and don't stop looking until you find it." - Clayton
6. "Without work all life goes rotten. But when work is soulless, life stifles and dies." - Camus
7. "Organize your energies along your own lines of natural interest and persistence, and you will do much more, so much better." - Kaiser
8. "Let your boat of life be light, packed with only
what you need... a homely home and simple pleasures, one or two friends worth the name, someone to love you, a cat, a dog, and a pipe or two, enough to wear, and a little more than enough to drink." -Jerome

9. "The expenditure of physical and mental effort in work is as natural as play and rest." - McGregor

10. "the simple pleasures of life are not acquired easily, they must be earned." - Unknown

Activity 1.2

Using the dictionary, previous experiences, or group discussions, complete the following:

Define values

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

Define goals

______________________________

______________________________

______________________________

From the list of work values listed below, choose the ones you consider most important according to your preference and number them accordingly. Discuss your
findings with your group. Discuss why each value is important to you and what you value most about work.

1. Social Science - working for the benefit of others and the society.
2. Variety - being engaged in many different activities and problems.
3. Recognition - being famous and to be known by many people.
4. Productive - making something which can be useful.
5. Physical performance - being able to do difficult tasks which require precision and coordination.
6. Leadership - influencing others in their work, being a leader, making decisions.
7. Orderliness - following set procedures, doing well ordered or repetitive routines.
8. Intellectual - solving complex questions requiring thought, applying concepts and knowledge to problems.
10. Independent - planning your own work activities, being free to change procedures.
11. Creativity - Initiating new ideas or products.
12. Artistic - producing something aesthetically
pleasing.

13. Adventure - doing exciting activities, being in new or uncertain situations, engaging in competitions.

**Activity 1.3**

List ten activities you enjoy doing and ten activities you would like to try doing in the future. Answer the questions listed below. Discuss your findings with your group.

Questions:
1. Which leisure activity do you most enjoy and why?
2. How can the school help you develop your leisure activities?
3. How can you include your leisure activities in your future plans?

**Activity 1.4**

Relate preferred leisure activities to occupations. Identify other related leisure activities and occupations. Discuss ways in which you can learn more about occupations you have listed.

My favorite leisure activities are:

1. 

2. 

56
The work values I consider the most important are:
1. 
2. 
3. 

The three occupations I have the most interest are:
1. 
2. 
3. 

The occupational skills I now possess or am interested in learning are:
1. 
2. 
3. 

What community activities are you presently involved with and how do these relate to your career interests?

What is the most important skill you possess that could be developed with further training?
Activity 1.5
Identify private and government organizations in your district which offer jobs of your interest you identified earlier. Use a telephone directory, newspaper advertisements, or other publications to identify prospective employers in your district.

Activity 1.6
Use of Community Resources to Research Occupations
A. One way of exploring occupations is to interview workers in the occupation. An advantage of this procedure is that you can gather information about the satisfaction the occupation gives the worker. Locate a worker within your district with an occupation you are most interested in and carry out an interview using the key points presented in the form given.

Student interviewer
Name of person interviewed
Occupation
Name of Organization
Number of years of service
Main functions, duties or responsibilities
Which is the most difficult task? ________________

Which is the most rewarding task for you? ________________

When and how did you decide to enter this occupation? ________________

What is the usual way to advance in this occupation? ________________

What benefits or retirement plans are available in this occupation? ________________

How would you describe your work environment? ________________

What changes have taken place in this occupation during the time you have been in it? ________________

What kind of changes do you see taking place in your occupation in the future? ________________
What suggestions would you give to anyone considering to enter your occupation?

B. Choosing an occupation involves researching description of occupations which interest you. As you read occupational literature, certain key points should be noted regarding occupations which interest you most. Use the form which follows to note the key points for particular occupations you are interested in.

Name of student

Title of occupation

What work do the workers do?

How do they do it?

What machines, tools or equipment are used?

What skills are involved in this occupation?

What are the requirements for this occupation?
Does the occupation involve manual skills? What are the physical demands of the workers?

Are there special requirements such as licensing or certification?

What is an average day for a worker in this occupation?

What is the future outlook for this occupation?

Summary

A point stressed in this unit is that students should learn as much as possible about jobs which interest them most. At the same time learning about other occupations with an open mind, and realize that values, beliefs, and a philosophy of life are essential components of the self. Each individual is responsible for the decisions he or she makes.

Exploring occupations provides students with the information which will be helpful in making career
decisions. A person explores an occupation by reading about it, and by talking to others. There are many private and governmental agencies which provide information about occupations. Students should be able to evaluate occupational materials accurately and relate them to individual interests and skills. Utilizing community resources to learn and explore occupations is an important aspect of career education.
UNIT 2: MAJOR COMPONENTS OF JOB SEEKING SKILLS

In the preceding chapters, I have described some of the common problems encountered by individuals with visual disabilities in seeking a career. In this section, attention is given to the personal requirements and some of the techniques for coping with these problems.

Qualification Evaluation

Anyone seeking employment must assess their progress from time to time. Individuals need to evaluate their skills and abilities realistically and to choose objectives which best utilize their talents. It is advisable for students to discuss their career plans with qualified people who are in a position to give sound advice on the basis of individual skills and conditions of the labor market. When assessing vocational goals, it is advisable to compile a list of marketable skills and then to think of as many applications of these skills as possible.

Presentation

Employers are accustomed to seeing many applications for positions. From the very beginning, it
is important for applicants to make a good impression. Initial contact with an employer should be made by letter or telephone. A telephone call is one way of arranging for an interview at a time that is convenient for those responsible for processing the application. Greenwood (1987) cited Hamilton et al. and stated that:

An analysis of the literature on the application process revealed that employers assign differential weight factors collected on the application form e.g. they pay particular attention to basic skills and literacy in relation to entry level employment. (p.38)

Telephone calls and letters should be polite, brief, and specific. Letters should be neatly typed and proofread to ensure there are no mistakes. Application letters provide a host of information for the employer. One should not dwell on qualifications or question the employer, but merely provide personal data and seek permission to come to the interview.

A resume is usually included with the letter if the position applied for requires an educational background or work experience. The employer will use
the resume as a guide in determining the suitability of applicants for particular occupations.

**Locating Employers**

Not every employer will have positions available to suit job applicants. Whether or not a particular employer is likely to hire job applicants will depend upon the suitability of an individual to a particular occupation. It is not easy to determine the suitability of employers. However, when this can be done, it will save time and effort.

Students in Fiji often believe that only certain employers will hire persons with visual disabilities. Therefore, they concentrate their efforts in contacting only these employers. Such assumptions are not true. Individuals must develop the confidence to contact a wider range of employers with an open mind.

Often vacancies occur at a short notice, and sometimes other workers absorb the work for a while before these positions are filled. The employer may or may not advertise the vacancy, but when the right applicant expresses interest in a job, the employer will then decide to fill the vacancy. Quite often employers wait for recommendations from employees and
known personnel, thereby, involving their employees in the decision making process. It is only logical that students apply to a wide range of employers, and establish meaningful contacts with those in employment.

Preparing a Resume

It is useful to prepare a resume when applying for technical, professional, or clerical jobs. A resume is a summary of an applicant's educational achievements, work experience, and interests. It should highlight personal data and some of the achievements one wants an employer to know. It must be neatly typed, stressing the qualifications directly related to the particular job. Such finer details may mean the difference between receiving affirmative or negative answers.

Distributing the Resume

Once a resume has been prepared, it can be sent in response to an advertisement together with an application. All resumes should be proofread to ensure there are no mistakes. Never send a carbon copy of a resume. It may offend an employer and make him wonder where the original went.

A resume also serves as a guide to employment.
interviewers who may not take the time to assist individuals with visual disabilities to fill out lengthy application forms. Much of the information can easily be transferred to the application from the resume.

One of the most important and effective uses of a resume is during a job interview. After initial introduction, it is appropriate to hand a copy of the resume to the interviewer if he does not have one. This procedure will help direct the conversation towards your best accomplishments and the interview should flow smoothly.

The Job Interview

At the convenience of the employer, an applicant must be interviewed in person. For individuals with visual disabilities must follow certain guidelines when preparing for an interview.

1. An applicant should learn in advance about the organization and its products. This will help the job seekers to be confident, talk intelligently, and give some clues as to the types of positions their experiences would qualify them to fill.

2. The applicant should go to the interview alone.
This will give the employer some indication that the visually disabled applicant can travel independently and would be able to report to work as scheduled. Most employers prefer to carry out interviews individually.

3. Transportation schedules, or arrangements with friends must be carefully planned in advance so as to be on time for the appointment.

4. Applicants need to impress their prospective employers with a clean and well-groomed appearance. Studies carried out by Roesner (1972) indicate that personal appearance was emphasized by many employers rather than such job related requirements as previous experiences or references. A clean shave and appropriate clothing is important for men. Women will need to consider their grooming carefully, making certain that their clothes, make up, hair, and nails are in good order.

5. An employer is interested in your skills, training, and experience. Stress these aspects in a polite manner and be brief. Speak with confidence of your achievements and give honest answers.

6. Do not talk too much during job interviews, but reply carefully to questions when they are asked. It
is permissible to ask questions but keep these to a minimum. The prospective employer may interpret questions as signs of interest.

7. The ability to explain a disability and resulting functional limitations is an important element in the interview. Farina and Felna (1973). Briefly explain the physical limitations of the disability to the interviewer. Do not dwell on the subject of blindness or on disabilities in general. Be honest in relation to the nature and extent of the eye condition. Many employers assume the extent to which visual disabilities affect the job performance. Individuals should stress how they utilize special devices such as tape recorders, braille machines, low vision aids or other electronic devices which help in effective job performance.

8. Applicants must stress their need for work, for employers are in business to make money and getting good employees is their major concern.

9. Often, applicants try hard to impress the interviewer with respect to things on which they disagree. It is not essential to agree with all statements or comments made by the interviewer. At
the same time, one should not argue with the interviewer.

10. Maintain facial contact with the interviewer, and speak directly to him or her. Be precise with your answers, and avoid distractions.

Summary

Seeking employment requires a number of skills; evaluating qualifications, locating employers, and preparing for the job interview are some of the concerns of special education. The specific guidelines for individuals with visual disabilities will help establish a campaign to contact as many employers, community leaders, and business organizations as possible.

Special education teachers, counselors, and prospective employers can all contribute to the process. Cooperation from the student will aid in making job search and career development meaningful and rewarding. Students should develop the skills to evaluate their abilities, identify openings, and be prepared to present themselves to prospective employers.

The development of good writing skills in
preparing resumes and application letters are important aspects of job seeking skills. Students should be prepared to attend interviews and display the willingness to undertake responsibilities.
Self Analysis

Activity 2.1

Students need to be aware of their strengths, abilities, skills, and weaknesses in order to relay the information to the employer. This is one of the most critical parts of job search. When discussing skills with an employer, students should be able to describe their characteristics. There are three things students should know about themselves:

1. Things they can do: Employers are interested to know the specific things the student can do such as operating a machinery or organizing a presentation.

2. Working conditions and roles they can play:
   Employers want to know if students will fit into the workplace they have, and how will they get along with other employees.

3. Things that students know: Jobs require knowledge as well as skills. Employers want to know if students possess the essential skills to carry out the job. Using the format given, develop a profile of yourself. Be sure to include the skills involved in performing the job which you can do. Include any
past work experience.

Educational achievements


Things I can do (operate machinery or write reports):


Working role (leader or follower, inside or outside work)


Things you know (inventory - money collecting):


Work Experience (holiday jobs etc.; State skills required for the particular job).


Strongest accomplishments in the job.


Greatest accomplishments in home life.


Accomplishments in community activities.
Hobbies and interests.

The occupations I have the most interest are:

List some of your skills that could be used in occupations you are interested in:

Activity 2.2

Now that you have identified your skills, you can identify your strengths and weaknesses. Remember, personal weaknesses can be turned into strengths, for example:

Weakness: "My goals are too high to reach."

Employer response: "This person is goal oriented."

Strengths:
1. _______________________________________________
2. _______________________________________________
3. _______________________________________________

Weaknesses:
1. _______________________________________________
Activity 2.3

Now that you have identified your skills, interests and abilities, prepare a resume. Remember a resume is a summary of your educational achievements, work experience, interests, and career objectives. Use the format given. Discuss this with your teacher.

NAME: ____________________________

ADDRESS: ____________________________

CAREER OBJECTIVES: ____________________________

EDUCATION: ____________________________

SCHOOL ACTIVITIES: ____________________________

COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES: ____________________________

GENERAL INFORMATION:

Personal interests: ____________________________

References: ____________________________
Activity 2.4

Locate a prospective employment position through newspaper advertisements or personal contact. Write an application letter for the position advertised. Include the following ideas in the body of your letter:

1. The first paragraph of your letter is very important. It must attract the readers attention. Write a paragraph indicating your interest in the particular occupation.

2. Write a paragraph showing your capabilities and interests. Indicate how work can also be a learning situation.

3. Write a paragraph telling an employer how your contribution can be beneficial to the organization.

4. Write one sentence indicating your availability for the interview.

5. Organize your sentences and paragraphs. Be neat and insure there are no errors. Read the letter to your neighbor. Congratulations, you have just written an application letter.
The Job Interview

Activity 2.5

From the point of view of an organization, an interview is conducted to:

1. Obtain information and impressions about the applicants.
2. Provide applicants with information about the organization.

Choose a leader for your group who will play the role of a job interviewer. Review the following most frequently asked questions in job interviews:

1. What do you like most about your studies? What is your academic major?
2. In what kinds of positions are you most interested in?
3. Can you describe your experiences in any previous employment positions held in this field?
4. What have you learned from your previous work experience?
5. In choosing a job, what are your most important considerations?
6. What courses have you taken that you think have helped prepare you for this position?
7. Why are you interested in working for our
8. Would you be willing to relocate if you are offered a position in another district?
9. What are your parents occupations?
10. How do you spend your leisure time?
11. What would you say is your strongest attribute?
12. What can you contribute to this organization?
13. Do you have any questions you want to ask?
References


