

Instructor's Guide
for
GETTING THE JOB YOU REALLY WANT VIDEO SERIES

Getting to Know What an Employer Wants

Overview

This video emphasizes the importance of understanding the job search from the employer's point of view. When you think like employers do, it's easier to make personal changes to fit their requirements. The video outlines the skills, attitudes, and personality traits that all employers value across all industries and discusses what job seekers can do to avoid being screened out during the job search process.

More specifically, it looks at three key expectations: first impressions, soft skills, and job-related skills and training. Employers want to know that an employee will look and act professional on the job, that he can be counted on to show up and do his work, that he will get along well with coworkers, and that he can immediately make a positive contribution to the organization. The video stresses the need to start convincing employers of one's potential from the very first contact. Finally it stresses that job seekers don't have to be the most qualified candidate on paper, provided they can convince an employer that they are the best workers and the best investment.

Presentation Suggestions

Ask students to think about a job that they've had in the past, or list several job titles and have students choose one. Then have them imagine that they are the owner of that company or the head of its HR department. Ask students to write down the five qualities they would look for most in a job candidate. Do this for several jobs. Are the qualities consistent? What is the most desirable characteristic? What does this tell them about how employers screen out or select potential candidates? What does it tell them about what *they* need to do to make the cut?

After you've discussed these expectations, give students the **Anticipation Quiz** to complete prior to viewing the video. If you wish, allow the students to state their answers and discuss them.

Show the video. Encourage students to make changes to the answers they put down for the Anticipation Quiz while watching the video. At the conclusion of the video, ask students to discuss any changes they made to their answers on the Anticipation Quiz as a result of information in the video.

Follow up the discussion with the **Activities**. Use the **Discussion Questions** to request oral or written responses from students, or assign the questions as homework essays.

Give the **Quick Quiz** at the conclusion of class and correct the quizzes as a group. Finally, assign the **Homework Option**, if desired.

Anticipation Quiz

Directions: Answer these questions as completely as possible. You may revise your answers as you watch the video.

1. What do employers look for most in new hires or when screening out candidates?
2. What goes into making a good first impression?
3. What are soft skills?
4. True or false: The most experienced worker always gets the job.

Answer Key

1. Good first impressions, soft skills, job-related skills and experience
2. Appearance, speech, posture, energy, self-confidence, mannerisms, respect
3. Skills that are valued across all jobs and industries, such as dependability and good communication skills
4. False

Activities

Activity #1: Two-minute hiring decision

Format: Small group

Time: 20–30 minutes

Materials: Timer or stop watch

Procedure:

1. Organize the class into groups of three. Assign each group a help-wanted ad or job opening description. Try to keep the jobs general (no heart surgeons or aeronautical engineers).
2. Ask students to take turns role playing an employer interviewing two different job candidates. Have each candidate try to convince the employer that he or she is dependable, professional, and motivated. Allow only two minutes for each candidate to make a positive impression.
3. Once both candidates have had their two-minute interview, the employer must make a decision about whom to “hire.” He or she then needs to explain that choice to the other two members of the group. Try to give everyone a chance to be the “employer.”

4. When everyone is finished, come back together as a group and discuss the qualities that made for the best impression.

Activity #2: Soft Skills Inventory

Format: Individual

Time: 15–20 minutes

Materials: Paper, pen

Procedure:

1. Explain what a soft skill is (skills that are not job specific). List the following soft skills on the board or overhead:

gets along with others	dependable	team player
willing to learn	reliable	problem solver
good communicator	creative	computer savvy

2. As a group, expand this list so that there are at least 15 soft skills that everyone agrees are important for most workers to have.
3. Have students write these skills on a sheet of paper and then rank them from 1 to 15 based on how important they are to employers.
4. Now ask students to go through each skill and rank themselves, on a scale of 1 to 5 (5 being the highest), at how good they are at each. Encourage students to be honest.
5. When all students have finished, ask them to compare their rankings of important skills to their own skill levels. Do they excel at the skills that they deem most valuable? If not, what steps can they take to improve those skills? Feel free to discuss these results as a whole class.

Discussion Questions

1. What kinds of red flags do employers look for when considering job applicants?
2. Name five things you can do to make a positive first impression. What might you do to make a negative one?
3. What benefits do soft skills offer employers? Why might they be more valuable than more-specific, job-related skills?

Quick Quiz

Note: You may read these questions out loud, allowing time for students to respond, or copy and hand this out as a written exercise. If you read the quiz, write responses on the board or overhead.

Directions: Indicate whether each statement is true or false, according to the video.

1. Soft skills are not as important as job-related skills.
2. Being dependable includes having a good attendance record.
3. Most employers don't care about your image provided you are good at your job.
4. Soft skills cannot be transferred from one job to the next.
5. Employers will look up information about you online when making hiring decisions.
6. First impressions are made entirely by how you dress.
7. It's not always the most qualified person who gets the job—it's the best job seeker.
8. Employers see new employees as investments.
9. You don't really get a chance to make an impression until the interview.
10. Employers will overlook a lack of job-related skills as long as you show an eagerness to learn them.

Answer Key

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| 1. False | 6. False |
| 2. True | 7. True |
| 3. False | 8. True |
| 4. False | 9. False |
| 5. True | 10. True |

Homework Option

Have students do an Internet search for the skills employers look for most. Encourage them to look at several sources and then to pick one skill that everyone agreed was important. The student should then come up with five ways to showcase that skill during the job search process. For example, how would they address that skill on a resume? In a cover letter? During an interview? On a job application? In the next class, make a master list of the most important skills and some strategies your students can use to convince employers that they have those skills.