

# Instructor's Guide

## for

### Expert Job Search Strategies for the Ex-offender DVD Series

#### Career Plans and Goals

#### Video 1 of 3

*"It had long since come to my attention that people of accomplishment rarely sat back and let things happen to them. They went out and happened to things." –Leonardo Da Vinci*

#### Overview

In this program, you learn about the importance of understanding what kind of job will make you happy. Because we spend a large part of our lives working, it is important that you do work you like. People who are satisfied at work lead happier lives and often live longer.

As an ex-offender you should be willing to take an entry-level job. Those who don't find work within the first 60 days of release are at high risk for re-offending. Try to plan for housing and transportation prior to release. Rebuild relationships with your family and have them help you look for work.

You have to be willing to do what's necessary and accept coaching from others. Because it's so important that you get work soon after release, be prepared to take a job that is not your ideal, and be patient. If you apply yourself and do the best you can, you can move into a job that makes you happier in time.

One type of job that brings fulfillment is in the non-profit sector. These jobs are community-based, and often offer a sense of purpose. These may be political organizations, private educational institutions, charities, or public assistance organizations. Use a Web search to find non-profits in your area, or look for job opportunities with organizations where you are already volunteering.

Finding a mentor can help you succeed in your job. A mentor is somebody who is a respected role model, somebody who might have a similar background to you who succeeded in a field of interest. When you find a mentor you have to be willing to receive tough information from that person and give back by showing you are committed and appreciate of his or her time.

Investing in yourself and your future is time well spent.

#### Presentation Suggestions

Write this phrase on the board or overhead: "Ex-offenders who don't find work within the first 60 days of release are likely to re-offend."

Ask students to discuss their reactions to this statement. Give them the **Anticipation Quiz** to complete prior to viewing the video.

Show the **program**. Encourage students to make changes to the answers they gave in the Anticipation Quiz while watching the program.

At the conclusion of the program, ask students to discuss any changes they made to the answers on the Anticipation Quiz as a result of watching the program.

Follow up the discussion with the Activities.

Use the **Discussion Questions** to request oral or written responses from the students.

Give the **Quick Quiz** at the conclusion of class and review the quiz questions as a group.

Assign the **Take-Away Activity**, if desired.

## Anticipation Quiz

**Directions:** Answer these questions as completely as possible. You will revise your answers as you watch the program.

1. Should you settle for a job that won't make you happy just to get work after release?
2. Who can help you find a job?
3. What is the role of a mentor?
4. What arrangements should you try to make prior to release?

### Answer Guide:

1. You may have to, but if you work hard you can move to a better job in time.
2. Your family.
3. To provide a role model, answer questions, to share tough information.
4. Housing and transportation.

## Activities

### Activity #1

**Title:** Aiming Too High?

**Format:** Individual

**Time:** 15 minutes

**Materials:** Paper and pens

One speaker in the program paraphrases Leonardo Da Vinci, saying that “The greatest danger is not that we aim too high and miss it but that we aim too low and hit it.” Write this statement on the board or overhead and ask students to list one goal in their career, family life, or community involvement that they consider hard to achieve, along with the potential barriers to success.

Have students discuss the statement and why they might feel comfortable aiming higher or lower for their career goals. Ask each student to pick a “high” career goal as well as an entry-level job they might apply for. See if any can identify a path from the entry-level job to their higher career goal.

### **Activity #2**

**Title:** Mentoring

**Format:** Small groups

**Time:** 25 minutes

**Materials:** None

1. Divide students into pairs. Ask each person in the pair to describe to the other person something he or she feels very good at.
2. Give each person 5 minutes to instruct the partner in this area of expertise.
3. At the end of the 10 minutes, have each person briefly describe something learned from the mentor that he or she never knew before.
4. Ask each student to write down and read aloud three things to look for in a career mentor.

### **Discussion Questions**

1. How does it make you feel to consider taking a job you don’t like when you are first released?
2. What characteristics should you look for in a mentor?
3. How can you use your personal contacts to help you identify the right job?
4. How can you present the way you used your prison time in a positive way?

### **Quick Quiz**

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/overhead.

1. Within what length of time after your release should you make sure you are working?

2. Name one example of a type of non-profit organization, according to the program?
3. How long might a mentoring relationship last?
4. What are some characteristics of a possible mentor?
5. Once you understand what motivates you, how can you research a job you might like?

### **Answer Key**

1. Within the first 60 days.
2. Political organizations, Meals on Wheels, private educational institutions, charities, or public assistance organizations.
3. 6 months to a lifetime.
4. They have a similar background, are a role model, and you respect them.
5. Work with a career counselor, read a book, or look at Web sites.

### **Take-Away Activity**

Ask students to write a description of a job that they could be passionate about and identify three companies that might offer such a position. Also have them research an entry-level job that might be easier to get when they are first released. Have them use the Internet, library, and network of family, friends or others they trust to help them identify these companies.

***See [www.jist.com](http://www.jist.com) for many other career and job search resources, including books, assessments, videos, and more.***