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Help Wanted: 14 Item Screening Tool for Students with Disabilities Seeking Employment

Instructions for the professional: The purpose of this screening tool is to help you quickly identify the student's main needs in terms of employment. Items are based on conversations with experts, interviews with students and graduates and their responses to our questionnaires. Although our project focused on postsecondary students and recently-employed graduates with disabilities, we feel that many of these tips could also be helpful to all students. We are grateful to the Entente Canada-Quebec for funding this work. You may use this screening tool during a first meeting with a student seeking employment or have the student complete it on their own before meeting you.

Three possible instructions for students:

- Please complete this and email it to me before we meet
- Bring this to me when we meet
- Hand it in to me by the time we meet

Note: You may revise this screening tool to make it more attractive, post it on your school web site or Facebook page, include it in a PowerPoint or enlarge it into a poster. In all cases, please include the publication and copyright information. Keep in mind that the Word version of this tool was specifically formatted to be accessible to students with disabilities who may be using adaptive technologies.

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Help Wanted: 14 Item Screening Tool for Students with Disabilities Seeking Employment

1. Where are you in the process of looking for a job (want to learn about job hunting, will be looking for a job soon, have already been looking for a job)?:
2. What is your main reason for looking for a job?:
3. What ways will you use / have you used to look for job opportunities? (put an x after the (:)) for as many as apply to you)
 - Already working in the field:
 - College professional (e.g., disability services personnel, employment counsellor):
 - Community employment center:
 - Contacts / networking:
 - Employment website (e.g. www.monster.ca):
 - Internship / stage:
 - Specialized employment service for individuals with disabilities:
 - Volunteering:
 - Other (please specify):
4. In which academic program are you currently registered?:
5. Are you / were you required to complete an internship as part of your program?:
6. Are you open to jobs that are not closely related to your field of study?:
7. Do you have any volunteer experience?:
8. Do you have any work experience?:

9. Rate each of the following by putting a number from 1 to 6 after the (:) (with 1 being "I am not skilled / not knowledgeable" and 6 being "I am highly very skilled / very knowledgeable")
- Networking:
 - Interview skills:
 - Bilingualism:
 - Office suite skills (e.g., Microsoft Office):
 - Human relations skills:
10. Do you wish to disclose your disability in your COVER LETTER or CV to potential employers? (put an x after the (:)) for the response that best applies to you)
- Yes:
 - No:
 - I am not sure:
 - Not applicable:
11. Do you wish to disclose your disability during the INTERVIEW with potential employers?(put an x after the (:)) after the response that best applies to you)
- Yes:
 - No:
 - I am not sure:
 - Not applicable:
12. Should we talk more about whether to disclose or not?
- Yes:
 - No:

13. Which of the following would you like to learn more about (put an x after the (:)) for all items)
- CV writing:
 - Developing human relations skills for work:
 - Disclosing a disability (if, when, how):
 - Finding volunteer opportunities:
 - Finding internship opportunities:
 - Job interview skills:
 - Meeting employers and creating contacts:
 - Requesting accommodations:
 - Using job search tools (Monster, Indeed, Jobboom, etc.):
14. What additional help could college professionals offer you with looking for a job (put an x after the (:)) for all items)
- Give CV writing workshops:
 - Give interview skills workshops (e.g., mock interviews):
 - Host job fairs:
 - Identify employers looking to hire students or graduates with disabilities:
 - Maintain an updated job bank:
 - Make referrals to external specialized employment services for individuals with disabilities:
 - Provide information on job search strategies:
 - Provide one-on-one employment counselling:
 - Provide volunteer opportunities:
 - Provide web resources on the disclosure of a disability:
 - Other (please specify):

Tip Sheet for Professionals

The tips below are based on conversations with experts, interviews with students and graduates as well as their answers to our questionnaires. Although our project focused on postsecondary students and recently-employed graduates with disabilities, we feel that many of these tips could also be helpful to all students. We are grateful to the Entente Canada-Quebec for funding this work.

Note. You may revise this tip sheet to include it in an email or PowerPoint, for example. In all cases, please include the publication and copyright information. Keep in mind that the Word version of this tip sheet was specifically formatted to be accessible to professionals with disabilities who may be using adaptive technologies.

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Tip Sheet for Professionals

- 1) No one college service is best suited to help students with disabilities look for employment. Consider a collaborative approach, including career counsellors, employment counsellors and /or disability service providers.
- 2) Career planning can be an important first step for many students who are job hunting. It can help them to see themselves as potential members of the work force and define the kind of job they are looking for.
- 3) Disability service providers and employment counsellors can work together to offer workshops for students on resume / CV writing, mock interviews, human relations skills in the workplace, etc. Disability service providers often know their students and have their confidence but employment counsellors are experts in job hunting.
- 4) Address questions that are disability-related. There may not be any easy answers as a lot depends on the student and their specific situation. However, students need to consider these issues ahead of time, and are often looking for guidance and may not be aware of existing resources.
 - If and when should one disclose a disability?
 - If and when should one request accommodations?
 - How can one be proactive and address an interviewer's potential concerns about their disability?
- 5) Provide an accessible and updated list of online resources and an online job bank.

- 6) There are a number of activities that you don't have to do on your own and that can best be organized through collaboration with other college personnel.
- Host job fairs and include representatives from government, community organizations and other employers who have a history of equity employment.
 - Organize job shadowing and on-site visits to various work settings.
 - Establish connections with potential employers through alumni, external board members, etc.
 - Seek out individuals with disabilities who have had work experience to act as mentors.
 - Hire students, including those with disabilities, for part-time work on campus.
 - Create opportunities on campus for all students to participate in volunteer work and find a mechanism to acknowledge their involvement.
 - Publicize programs such as the Canada Summer Jobs (CSJ) which provides wage subsidies to employers to create employment for those who are in underrepresented groups, including youth with disabilities.
 - Before graduation, refer students with disabilities to community resources that support those looking for work.
- 7) Find the means to create a support network for recent graduates who no longer have access to college services.
- Allow recent graduates to check the college employment website for information on job opportunities.
- 8) Make sure you publicize the great things you are doing to help students and recent graduates obtain employment in an accessible manner so that all students, including those with disabilities, are aware of what is available to them in the college.

Tips for Students with Disabilities Seeking Employment

Note to the Professional: You may revise this document to make it more attractive, post it on your school web site or Facebook page, include it in a PowerPoint, turn it into a pamphlet or enlarge it into a poster. In all cases, please include the publication and copyright information. Keep in mind that this Word version was specifically formatted to be accessible to students with disabilities who may be using adaptive technologies.

The tips below are based on conversations with experts, interviews with students and graduates as well as their answers to our questionnaires. Although our project focused on postsecondary students and recently-employed graduates with disabilities, we feel that many of these tips could also be helpful to all students. We are grateful to the Entente Canada-Quebec for funding this work.

1. Keep in mind that whether you are an introvert, an extrovert or somewhere in between, networking helps to find jobs.
2. Both experts and recent post-secondary graduates who found work see volunteering and acquiring work experience as important.
3. In addition to specific job skills, bilingualism and interview skills are very helpful.
4. Consider using employment centres that offer services to specific populations such as youth. In Quebec, SEMOs are dedicated to finding jobs for individuals with disabilities (<https://roseph.ca/nos-membres/repertoire-des-membres/>)
5. Do research before the interview about the company and the job. This will help you answer interview questions as well as ask some relevant questions of your own.

6. There is no easy answer about whether or not to disclose a disability or a special need during an interview. It all depends on you and your specific situation but you need to consider this matter ahead of time. Here is a set of criteria to consider: (<https://studentsuccess.mcmaster.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Disclosure-and-Accommodations.pdf>)
7. Be proactive in the interview. One way is to anticipate any potential concerns you think the interviewer may have and bring them up yourself at an appropriate point in the interview.
8. People said that if they asked for accommodations they usually received them. Keep this in mind when deciding whether or not to ask for accommodations, if needed.
9. Not all job opportunities offer full-time employment. Before you ignore this option, explore whether or not part-time work might be advantageous for you.
10. A study in 2018 shows that two-page curriculum vitae, as opposed to one page, are preferred by employers.

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