

How to Organize a Job Club

Organizing a Job Club

What is a Job Club?

A Job Club is an organized group of job seekers who work together to obtain competitive employment opportunities. Generally, this is done under the leadership of a staff member who facilitates group sharing, provides learning experiences related to seeking employment, as well as additional information, training or materials needed to obtain employment.

Planning for a Job Club

Job Clubs should be focused and organized. This means that those planning it will need to determine what the objectives of the Job Club will be. Some things to consider are:

- What services will be provided
- When & where will meetings be held?
- How long will each meeting last?
- How many sessions will be held?
- Who will facilitate the Job Club & are other staff needed?
- What equipment or materials are needed?
- How many job seekers will be optimal for the group?
- What kind of documentation will be kept?
- Will there be any type of evaluation completed?
- How and who will complete any follow-up activities?

Job Club Objectives

It will be important to decide what you want your Job Club to achieve. Is it just to help job seekers get a competitive job or to provide a network of mutual support for those involved? Make sure you decide the overall purpose before moving further in the planning process so each step can be guided by your objectives.

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Job Club Components

It has been shown that successful Job Clubs include training and experience in the following areas:

1. **Confidence building** – activities to help improve a customer's self esteem
2. **Skills analysis** – identifying transferable skills and corresponding opportunities
3. **Job counseling** – setting employment goals, identifying barriers, and developing a plan to overcome them. For a One-Stop, this could be developing an Individual Employment Plan.
4. **Job Readiness Skills** – knowing and understanding the basics, such as completing applications or resuming and cover letter writing.
5. **Job Search Skills** – identifying all of the online and offline tools needed for an effective job search, including techniques for obtaining an interview.
6. **Interviewing Skills** – practice on how to effectively present yourself to an employer
7. **Group Support System** – giving and getting feedback, sharing experiences

Things to Consider

Logistics: Meetings should be scheduled when it's convenient to the job seeker. Remember that this may mean scheduling meetings at a time when job seekers will have access to computers, printers, fax machines, etc. Be sure the meeting time and location is consistent.

Job Club Facilitator: The Job Club Facilitator should have knowledge of the local labor market and know how to use effective training and facilitation techniques. They should also be well versed in the roles of other staff members and have access to local speaker, employers or other needed community resources.

Funding: Determine how partner agencies can play a role in supporting the Job Club. If possible, consider co-enrollment of customers in other programs offered through the One-Stop Center, Title V and/or Department of Rehabilitation.

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Operating a Job Club

Selecting Job Club Members

The ideal customers for Job Club are those that are ready and eager to find employment. Small groups of eight to 15 are considered optimal, but Job Clubs can range in size from five to 10 people.

Job Club Sessions

Job Club sessions can vary. They may last from two weeks to 90 days, depending on the availability of the Job Club Facilitator, access to space, materials, etc. They can be run daily, weekly, bi-weekly, or monthly depending on the design you select. An intense Job Club could run three days a week for a certain period, and then meet one day bi-weekly. Other options may be to run a group weekly.

Sessions should always include time for participants to share their job search experiences, any “wins” or successes they may have had, and at the end of the session an opportunity to share about any employers that may have opportunities that may be of interest to the group. Some Job Clubs require participants to bring a certain number of leads to each meeting, even if it doesn’t apply to their particular job search. Be sure to decide the ground rules up front.

Record Keeping

A good rule of thumb when providing any type of service is to document, document, document! Be sure to record the names of those in attendance at each meeting, the activities you completed during the sessions, and any additional information that may be helpful to the case manager if the participant(s) are enrolled in Workforce Investment Act (WIA) or any other partner services.

Each job seeker should be completing a daily/weekly Job Search Log, which at a minimum should include: their name, date & type of job search activity, company name & contact information, outcome of the activity, and amount of time spent. In addition, if this is an enrolled customer, copies of these files should be included in the main case

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file. If it's not possible to input the data right away, a system should be developed to keep the case manager abreast of the activities and progress the participant is making.

Follow-Up Activities

Don't forget to do follow-up after the participant has been placed or has exited the Job Club. Please follow WIA guidelines for follow-up and determine if follow-up is to be completed by the Job Club Facilitator or the case manager. If other partner agencies are involved, be sure you understand their follow-up requirements. Follow-up activities may be able to be done jointly.

Evaluations

It's always best to evaluate the services you are providing. Job Club services are generally evaluated by a participant's success in obtaining competitive employment. Other things that can be looked at are the type of jobs that have been obtained, how long it took, whether they are full or part-time, rate of pay, and benefits information.

Participant satisfaction should be done on a regular basis.