**Purpose**

To instruct staff on assisting customers in productive job search within multiple programs. Career Specialists will use a multi-tool approach to help customers balance their individual goals and program elements, to help them overcome their barriers to employment.

Career Specialists must be aware of the customer’s programmatic requirements, and may have to adjust their service plan accordingly.

Career Specialists and the customer will develop a service plan to include job search utilizing a combination of WorkInTexas.com (WIT), assessment (TABE), locally implemented Job Clubs and Workshops, other job search websites, hiring events, and resources to remove barriers.

Career Specialist will be measured on:

* Quality of customer’s WIT registration
* Number of quality referrals in WIT
* Quality of documentation
* Quality of Counselor Note data entry in TWIST
* Quality of service entry in WIT
* Execution of the customer’s service plan
* The number of customers obtaining and retaining employment

**Procedure**

The job search process will focus on the following elements.

* Thorough assessment of the customer’s goals, work readiness, skills, work history, and barriers.
* Stressing the customer arrive at Workforce Solutions for job search dressed “Interview Ready.”
* Promoting an aggressive job search plan for rapid reemployment.
* Work in Texas job referrals provided weekly, at minimum
* Building a strong resume and State of Texas application
* Assigning workshops based on the customer’s individual situation
* Support Services for barrier removal (based on participation and program limitations)
* Weekly, in person review of Job Search Worksheet and discussion of job search activities and follow-up of referrals given from WIT.
* Frequent reassessment of the service plan.

Career Specialists will review and discuss the following items with customers during intake:

* Types of employment experience the customer has,
  + Listen for transferable skills, desire to return to the field, or potential issues that might present a problem with securing employment.
* Reasons for leaving employment in prior jobs,
  + Listen for reasons that might need counsel or might give clues toward additional barriers. Examples to listen for might include health problems, missing too much time, child care issues, background issues, not getting along with coworker or boss.
* Length of time the customer has been *actively* seeking employment,
* The number of job applications the customer is required to complete each week,
* The type of work the customer is currently seeking,
* Additional types of work the customer is willing to consider,
* The types of work the customer cannot and would prefer not to work, and
* Wage expectations

The Career Specialist should be familiar with how their customers are marketing themselves to prospective employers. The Career Specialist must evaluate the customer’s resume in WIT and personal resume used for other job search websites in the earliest stages of job search.

Each customer should have a quality WIT registration. Career Specialists should assist the customer with their registration, and document referrals in Counselor Notes.

Since Work in Texas is individualized to the customer’s job search needs, each registration will vary depending on the customer’s area, occupational goals, education, and barriers. Staff should help the customer to build the most complete registration possible.

Customers should be encouraged to complete a generic job application so the Career Specialist may review for areas that might unintentionally screen the customer out of employment.

* Did the customer follow application instructions?
* Did the customer use NA in areas that do not apply?
* Did the customer list work history (as instructed by application)?
* Did the customer cover gaps in employment?
* Did the customer complete the application legibly?
* Did the customer list appropriate reasons for leaving?

The Career Specialist may send the customer to workshops to help educate the customer on applications and resumes and provide further guidance.

Based on the answers your customer provided in assessment and through the Work in Texas/ Applications development, the Career Specialist and the Customer will develop a service plan for obtaining employment.

Working with the customer, the Career Specialist will develop a timeline for obtaining employment. While the customer’s input is critical, the maximum duration for the “Obtain Employment” goal on the service plan will be **4 Weeks**. At the end of 4 weeks, the Service Plan must be reevaluated. The customer may be required to engage in another activity.

Customers should be assigned a combination of Job Search contacts, Job Club, Workshops, and hiring events as part of their reemployment strategy.

**Job Search Attire**

Customers should be instructed to arrive in the Center for Job Club, workshops, and conduct all job search activities in interview ready attire.

Since interview attire is subjective based on the employment the customer is seeking, the Career Specialist should discuss possible outfits that are appropriate for the customer’s profession.

Interview Appropriate attire for customers who are unable to obtain appropriate attire on their own, can be obtained through a referral to Ester’s Closet. If a Career Specialist discovers a customer is not in appropriate attire, the customer should be counseled, and reminded of the expectation.

If the customer continues to attend job search activities in attire not appropriate for job search (without good cause), the customer should be asked to leave, change clothes, and return to the activities. The customer should be reminded that he or she is not following their service plan and could be considered noncompliant.

**Assigning Job Search**

Job search across all programs is structured to provide a streamlined, intensive, and staff assisted approach to helping customers find employment. Staff should focus on the customer’s needs and balance those need with mandatory program guidelines, if required.

Under the guidelines, customers with mandatory program requirements are instructed to:

(Note: Instructions are paraphrased for clarity.)

1. Apply by leaving an application or resume at businesses where they are willing and qualified to work.
   * Customers should not apply for positions for which they are not qualified or are unwilling to work. Customers should be counseled to carefully read job descriptions and determine if they are a good fit for the position. Contacts for which the customer is not qualified will not count toward participation. Turning down offers of employment may be considered noncompliance.
2. If told a company is not hiring, the customer should ask to leave an application on file. If the employer will not take an application, the customer may write that the employer is “not hiring” on the job search worksheet
   * Career Specialists should discuss instances of “Not Hiring” on job search worksheets, obtaining information about the process.
3. Obtain names, address, and phone numbers of references and information concerning prior employment.
4. Each application or resume that a customer leaves with an employer may be considered one contact.
   * One contact per employer, per location, per position.
   * Duplicate applications to the **same employer and position** will not count.
   * Contacts for picking up applications (without dropping off completed form), calling to inquire about open positions or completed applications, or dropping by a location to merely ask about an opening (without taking action) will not count.
5. The customer may count more than one contact with an employer if they are going back for a different job, an interview, pre-employment screening, or filling out paperwork.

**Job Search Contacts**

The number of weekly contacts for Choices & SNAP E&T, should reflect the customers participation requirement. The first week’s participation may be prorated, based on the day the customer attends their initial appointment.

Customers may job search any day of the week. The participation weeks start on Sunday and end on Saturday.

Each completed job search contact on the Job Search Worksheet will count for **2 hours of participation for both Choices and SNAP.** To be considered complete, the contact must contain the name, complete address, and phone number for the prospective employer; the name of the person contacted; the position for which the customer applied; the results of the job search contact (turned in application, submitted online application, interview, pre-employment screening, hire paperwork).

Job Search may be combined with other activities like employment or community service. However, Job Search should never be used as a filler to pad participation hours. The goal of job search is to help a customer find meaningful, **full time** employment. Customers should be actively engaged in obtaining another job or looking to replace their existing job.

**Work In Texas Matches**

Career Specialists should review WorkInTexas.com with customer at each appointment. Job Matches should be discussed with the customer. Suitable matches should be moved to the customer’s Interested List and the customer should be provided with application instructions.

Referrals should be documented in Counselor Notes. Career Specialists should reflect progress updates on any referrals made in prior appointments or provided by other staff members, or by self-referrals.

Career Specialists should follow WIT procedures for providing job matches and entering appropriate services in WIT.

**Job Fairs and Hiring Events**

Customers should be assigned to attend any scheduled hiring event or job fair that are offering positions for which the customer is qualified.