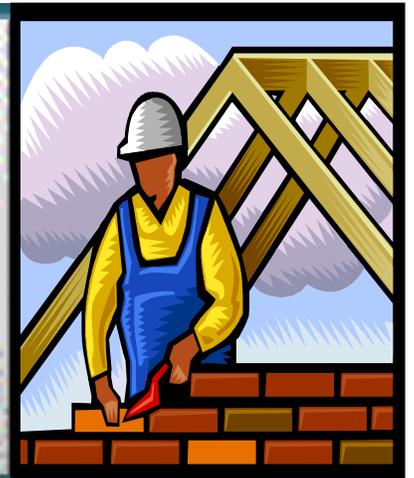




# Ex-Offender Employment Re-Entry Guide

“Self-Study Workbook”

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# Ex-Offender Employment Re-Entry Guide

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## Where to Start

**Have you prepared yourself for release? *Check the items you currently have:***

- Resume
- Master Application
- Prospective Employers List
- Copies of Certificates and Degrees
- Letters of Recommendation
- Driver's License or State Issued Identification Card
- Actual Social Security Card (not photocopy)
- Birth Certificate or Certified Copy of same

**Check all educational accomplishments achieved during your incarceration (like forklift, welding, construction trades).**

- GED
- Vocational Certificates (please list)
- Work Experiences (on-the-job training)
- Associate Degree (specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- Bachelors Degree (specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- Masters Degree (specify): \_\_\_\_\_
- Other (specify): \_\_\_\_\_

**Would you be willing to seek assistance through job/work related programs designed to help ex-offenders? Yes ( ) No ( )**

**List any ex-offender assistance program(s) with which you are familiar.**

Examples: Department of Economic Security or State Unemployment  
One Stop Career Center and Offender Employment Services

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## Where to Start

### Job Search Technique

Although traditional job search techniques are not always the most successful way to obtain employment, you must have knowledge of this process when you begin your search. Usually job seekers are more successful applying directly to employers. With this approach, you can directly tell them your strengths, break stereotypes, and directly address the concerns of the employer.

### Resources:

- Community Resources (One Stop Career Centers, Community Colleges)
- Networking
- Telephone Book
- Newspapers
- Employment Agencies
- Internet/CareerNet

### Job applications and resumes:

- Traditional training required?
- Explain time gaps
- Be straightforward
- List institutional work, training, education, accomplishments
- Answer the question: “Have you ever been convicted of a felony?”

### Telephone skills:

- Call employers directly

### Interview skills:

- Traditional interview skills training required
- Video tape and critique if possible
- Be honest
- Explain criminal record/charges if asked
- Present efforts of rehabilitation
- Present portfolio of accomplishments
- Reinforce why you are the one for the job

## Where to Start

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### Paycheck Checklist

**Complete the following checklist to prepare ahead of time to get your first paycheck. If you don't take care of these items they will prevent you from getting and keeping a better job.**

- Get a valid Driver's License or State I.D. card
- Get a copy of my driving record
- Get a certified copy of my Birth Certificate
- Get a valid Social Security Card
- Get clothes for work or interviewing
- Get information needed to set up child support payments
- Get a copy of my military records or DD-214
- Get any licenses or certifications necessary for the job
- Get a copy of your credit report and begin the repair process
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Where to Start

### **Characteristics that contribute to making a happy, fulfilling, and complete life.**

Select the 10 attributes you feel are most important to be or have part of your life.

- \_\_\_\_\_ known as an honest, trustworthy person
- \_\_\_\_\_ enjoy a long and healthy life
- \_\_\_\_\_ a good marriage relationship
- \_\_\_\_\_ an enjoyable, low stress life
- \_\_\_\_\_ known as a “genuine” person
- \_\_\_\_\_ having a meaningful love relationship
- \_\_\_\_\_ some honest, close friendships
- \_\_\_\_\_ be financially secure
- \_\_\_\_\_ a secure and positive family life
- \_\_\_\_\_ accomplishing something worthwhile
- \_\_\_\_\_ owning a possession of great value
- \_\_\_\_\_ having a meaningful relationship with God
- \_\_\_\_\_ opportunities for recreational and cultural pursuits
- \_\_\_\_\_ freedom to live your life as you want
- \_\_\_\_\_ continuing to learn and gain knowledge
- \_\_\_\_\_ a life with meaning, purpose, and fulfillment
- \_\_\_\_\_ positive self-confidence and personal growth
- \_\_\_\_\_ physique of which you can be proud
- \_\_\_\_\_ opportunity to help the sick and disadvantaged
- \_\_\_\_\_ time to enjoy the beauty of nature
- \_\_\_\_\_ beautiful home in the setting of your choice
- \_\_\_\_\_ chance to develop your creative potential
- \_\_\_\_\_ satisfaction and success in a chosen career
- \_\_\_\_\_ travel, fine foods, and entertainment

There is a life for you beyond the joint. Who will you become on the outside? Believing in and realizing your dreams and goals don't happen by magic. It's a consequence and result of your own effort, energy, and invested time and effort. At that point you can claim the honor and satisfaction of having earned your own happiness.

## Where to Start

### Why I am better off working

Read the following seven reasons why you are better off employed than unemployed. All of the reasons may mean something to you as you read them but one will probably seem more important than the others will.

**Think about each reason and decide which two are the most important reasons for you to be employed.**

1. Employment would help me develop a greater sense of self-worth, self-respect, and self-esteem.
2. Having a job means I could make a positive contribution to the community.
3. I would be a better role model for my family and children by being employed.
4. I would become more independent and in control of my own life.
5. Employment would help me develop my natural abilities and discover my talents.
6. A job would give my family and me a greater sense of security and well being.
7. I would have a better opportunity to gain financial prosperity and success if I had a job.

**Write your choices below and describe why these are important as you enter the workforce:**

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## Where to Start

### Successes vs. Failures

Successful People	Unsuccessful People
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expect success</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Expect failure</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Think they can</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't want to try</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try whole-heartedly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Try half-heartedly</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Fake it till they make it</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believe that lack of confidence is proof that they will fail</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand failure is a necessary ingredient to learning how to succeed</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blame others for their lack of success</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believe that they have control of their lives</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feel powerless</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Believe problems are temporary challenges</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give up when the going gets tough</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take responsibility for their successes and their mistakes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Deny any responsibility</li> </ul>

### It is your choice where your journey will take you.

The difference between success and failure is a choice. While some accept what they get, others will not and try to earn what they want. It's much easier to give up than to do what it takes to achieve. The time, energy and effort to accomplish add the value to anything meaningful in life.

There is always another chance for those who will not give up. It's true everyone willing to make the honest commitment to contribute to society as a citizen, and the economy as a worker, earns their second chance. Decide what this may mean to you. This choice has made the difference in the lives of millions.

The credit belongs to the person who is actually in the job market, whose face is marred by dust and sweat. Be one who knows the enthusiasm, the great devotion, and spend themselves on a worthy cause that produces. Who at best if they win knows the thrill of high achievement and if they fail at least fails while daring greatly so that their place shall never be with those cold and timid souls, who know neither victory nor defeat.

## Work Related Values

### Identify Strengths and Limitations

Any job, in any organization, will give you knowledge and skills that will be valued by future employers. Working in any organization can make you so used to doing tasks in a certain way that you will have to relearn how to perform in another organization. Even the terms or words you frequently use will be different. For example, the use of military, or jail lingo will need to be re-learned to be spoken in plain English before an employer will understand you.

This section addresses the specific strengths and limitations of your work experience. As you read this section, think about all of your life experiences and what you can do to capitalize on your strengths and overcome these limitations.

### Strengths

Your experiences in life have probably given you a lot of work experiences that will be useful to many employers. Your task is to consider your own work and find a way to use the information to your best advantage. Following is a list of some the strengths you probably have acquired in your life and work experiences. As you read the list, on a separate piece of paper make notes about your own experiences. You will use the notes later in preparing your resume to emphasize traits that an employer is looking for.

1. **Leadership** – You may have had responsibility for others and their activities. You are trained to lead by setting an example and by giving directions.
2. **Ability to conform to rules and structure** – In any organization there must be rules and structure to avoid chaos. Companies value employees who will follow the rules and fit into the structure of the work place.
3. **Ability to learn with advanced training** – You may have receive intensive training, and often specialized or advanced training, that gives you expertise in a certain field.
4. **Familiarity with records** – You are familiar with the need for keeping records and completing paperwork. You understand the need to be accountable for everything you do.
5. **Ability to work as a team member and a team leader** – You understand that everything you do affects someone else. You may have been in a position to serve as a team leader where you analyze situations and options, made decisions, gave directions, followed through and accepted responsibility.
6. **Ability to work within a diverse group** – Ability to work with all races, genders, economic statuses, ages, religions, intelligences. You are able to work with people from all backgrounds, attitudes, and characteristics.

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7. **Ability to work under pressure and meet deadlines** – You do the job right the first time. There is pressure and stress; if you fail, people could suffer. This attitude toward work is valued in the business community. Do what it takes to get the results.
8. **Systematic planning** – You are able to consider objectives, the strengths, and limitations of others, resources, time schedules, logistics and various factors. You also assess progress during the operation. The ability to plan and attention to details is highly valued in the business community.
9. **Emphasis on safety** – You understand the cost of lives, property, and objectives when safety is ignored. An emphasis on safety will often be valued. Certification or knowledge of first aid and/or CPR is desired for preparedness by any organization for disaster or injuries.
10. **Ability to give and follow directions** – You know how to work under supervision. You are accountable for your actions and follow through. Being disciplined in your life and when dealing with others is important in the workplace.

### Limitations

1. **Disqualifying crimes** – There are crimes that will disqualify a person from working jobs with vulnerable adults, individuals with developmental disabilities or mental illness, and children, which are called disqualifying crimes and can be obtained from employers or the licensing department of the career field in which you are interested. Some employers have written policies disqualifying job applicants from employment for any convictions of manufacture, possession, and/or delivery of controlled substances depending on the nature of their business.
2. **Communication** – You might have learned to use acronyms, military talk, jail lingo, or jargon but most people will not understand you. You must consciously think about using words that will be understood in the workplace that you are applying for.
3. **Stress** – You have learned to work under pressure and have dealt with stressful situations. In the workforce, people sometimes get laid off with nothing more than a written notice with their paycheck. Job search can produce stress and change and uncertainty will usually always produce stress. Stress is a normal part of our lives. We can't avoid it and it can either be a negative or a positive.
4. **Money** – You may have a few weeks or even months without work. It may take months to find the right job. You will need to save money, figure out how much money you will need, and develop a budget. Applying for food stamps will help maintain your nutrition and energy level. Even though a good job search strategy will reduce the time you spend unemployed, you will still need to budget and conserve resources.
5. **Stereotypes** – Being aware of stereotypes up front will help you break them down when you encounter them. Watch out for the stereotypes **you** have of others, too!

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Some stereotypes of the ex-offender:

- Untrustworthy
- Addict
- Unemployable
- Gang member
- Tattoos and body piercing
- Bad attitude
- Poor me, blaming, self-pity
- Violent, aggressive

6. **Unrealistic expectations** – Frequently someone who has been out of the work world may have expectations too high for the jobs available and that they are qualified for. You may have to consider taking less pay for an opportunity to prove yourself in a new line of work. Flexibility to take the best job offer obtainable will afford stability from a steady income. The reality of the modern job market is that you'll need to continue job searching, while working full or part time, for a better job offer.

### **Develop a Personal Stress Management Plan**

1. Recognize the stresses surrounding your job search and personal life. Try to identify some of the feelings you experience and different ways in which you can adjust.
2. Develop a job search plan.
  - Commit to your plans.
  - Review the results weekly, and make needed adjustments.
  - Don't take minor rejections too seriously.
  - Much of the stress you may experience when looking for work will diminish as your plans come together. You will feel a sense of relief and gradually being to gain back the control over your life that you feel was lost.
3. Structure your time and practice time management.
  - Begin your day by organizing your tasks.
  - Focus your total concentration on the task at hand, one task at a time.
  - Do not allow other people to waste your time.
  - Focus your total concentration on the task at hand.
4. Start and maintain an exercise and nutrition regimen.
  - Engage yourself in fun activities and exercise your mind and body.
  - Follow a healthy eating plan with plenty of healthy foods.
  - Avoid alcohol and drugs.
5. Maintain your religious beliefs, social or family customs and daily routines.
6. Learn and use relaxation techniques.

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7. Develop and maintain support systems.
  - Surround yourself with positive people.
  - Help others. Volunteer your time.
  - Join a support group.
8. Schedule time for yourself.
  - Your job search is not personal time; it is your current job. Allow time to reward yourself for accomplishments.
9. Communicate openly and honestly with others.
10. Establish a life plan and career goal.
11. Include humor and laughter in your life. Even smiling relieves stress levels.

### **Check your stress**

**Place a check mark next to each statement that applies to you.**

1. \_\_\_ I sleep 7-8 hours most every night.
2. \_\_\_ I drink fewer than 5 alcoholic beverages a week.
4. \_\_\_ I give and receive affection regularly.
5. \_\_\_ I exercise 3 times a week.
6. \_\_\_ My income is adequate to meet my basic needs.
7. \_\_\_ I have a network of friends and acquaintances.
8. \_\_\_ I am in good health (including eyes, hearing, and teeth).
9. \_\_\_ I am able to speak about my feelings when angry or worried.
10. \_\_\_ I have conversations with people I live with about chores, money, etc.
11. \_\_\_ I regularly participate in social or other activities.
12. \_\_\_ I do something for fun at least once a week.
13. \_\_\_ I have at least one friend or relative nearby on whom I can rely.
14. \_\_\_ I eat a well balanced diet.
15. \_\_\_ I am close to the appropriate weight for my height.
16. \_\_\_ I drink less than 4 caffeine beverages a day.
17. \_\_\_ I get an adequate amount of quiet time for myself during the day.
18. \_\_\_ I have a plan or methods to better manage the stress in my life.

**Total number of checks \_\_\_\_\_.**

If there are 7 or less, you might not be doing all you can to reduce or manage stress in your life. Review the list and identify one or two that you can add each week to help improve your health at a very stressful time in your life.

## Analyze Your Skills

*“What are my work preferences and interests?”*

**A successful job hunt begins by really knowing yourself and what you enjoy doing.**

### **Transferable Skills**

Transferable skills are also referred to as “hire me” skills since every employer desires them. Their name is such because they are skills that transfer from one type of work to another. Most adults have actually developed over 500 specific skills. Unfortunately, job seekers are only able to discuss 5-8 during an interview.

This section will help you identify your transferable skills which employers seek most. Being able to identify transferable skills will build confidence in the skills you possess, enhance your resume and application, and increase your effectiveness during the job interview process.

#### **Objectives:**

- Identify transferable skills and personal qualities that job seekers feel comfortable presenting to an employer.
- Provide written evidence of these skills and qualities in a form that could be presented directly to an employer.
- Learn to identify skills a job seeker can market to an employer.
- Identify specific occupations that utilize job seeker’s transferable skills and personal qualities.

#### **Overview:**

Skills and abilities are the building blocks of job success. Learn to identify, demonstrate and package with confidence the skills and personal qualities today’s employers desire.

The new economy requires workers who can transfer skills from one work setting to another, and who have the kinds of personal qualities that make organizations successful. Successful job seekers must know how to identify these skills and qualities within themselves, and be able to describe and demonstrate them in ways that have meaning to employers. Participants in this section will learn how to identify and demonstrate a variety of skills and personal qualities desired by employers. They will be able to package their skills in a way that will communicate their desirability to employers.

## Analyze Your Skills

### Transferable skills and character traits list

Based on your work experience, volunteer experience, military experience, educational experience and total life experience, place a check mark next to the skills that you possess. Next, circle skills and character traits that you believe are your strongest. Now list the words on a separate piece of paper and write an example to show that you possess those skills. These will be your transferable skills that you will want to feature on your application, resume, and in the interview responses.

<p><b><u>Leadership</u></b>                      Competitive                      Decisive                      Delegate                      Direct others                      Explain things to others                      Initiate new tasks                      Make decisions                      Mediate problems                      Motivate people                      Negotiate agreements                      Planning                      Result-oriented                      Take risks                      Conduct meetings                      Self-confident                      Solve problems                      Generate ideas</p>	<p><b><u>Working with people</u></b>                      Aided                      Administer                      Answered questions                      Attended/assisted others                      Counsel others                      Demonstrate                      Instruct                      Listen                      Negotiate                      Patient                      Persuade                      Supervise                      Tactful                      Teaching                      Tolerant                      Trusting                      Tutored                      Understanding</p>	<p><b><u>Dealing with data</u></b>                      Analyze data                      Audit records                      Budgeting                      Calculate/compute                      Compile                      Detail oriented                      Document research                      Evaluate                      Investigate                      Keep financial records                      Locate information                      Manage money                      Posted                      Programmed                      Proofread                      Record facts                      Take inventory</p>
<p><b><u>Creative/Artistic</u></b>                      Artistic                      Drawing                      Expressive                      Perform, act                      Present artistic ideas</p>	<p><b><u>Key skills</u></b>                      Coordinated tasks                      Instructing others                      Implement                      Managing resources                      Managing people                      Meeting deadlines                      Serving the public                      Negotiating                      Organizing projects                      Performed                      Processed                      Provided                      Scheduled                      Served                      Supervised                      Transported</p>	<p><b><u>Using words</u></b>                      Articulate well                      Communicate verbally                      Correspond with others                      Create new ideas                      Design                      Develop/create                      Encouraged                      Edit                      Greeted                      Justified                      Presented                      Promoted                      Published                      Speak publicly                      Teamwork                      Telephoned                      Write clearly</p>
<p><b><u>Using hands</u></b>                      Assemble things                      Build things                      Construct/repair buildings                      Dismantled                      Drive, operate vehicles                      Fabricated                      Loaded                      Operating tools, machines                      Repair things                      Typed</p>		

## Analyze Your Skills

### Determine Your Work Preferences

This exercise helps you to identify vocational interest, personal style and work preferences. For example, your interest should be related to the jobs that you decide to pursue. Your values should not conflict with the occupation you choose. Complete this survey to identify your work preferences. Think about your work preferences and circle all the responses that best complete the phrase for you.

- 1) I enjoy working with:
  - data (information, words, numbers)
  - people
  - things (machines, equipment)
  
- 2) I prefer working:
  - indoors
  - outdoors
  - some inside and some outside
  
- 3) I would like to work for a company:
  - with less than 100 employees
  - with 100 to 500 employees
  - with 500 or more employees
  - that is family owned
  
- 4) I would like to work in a:
  - large city
  - medium city
  - town or suburban area
  - small town or rural area
  
- 5) I want a job that requires:
  - interacting with a lot of people
  - some interaction with people
  - very little human interaction
  - no interaction with people
  
- 6) I would like work duties that:
  - frequently change
  - vary from day to day
  - are fairly routine
  - never change
  
- 7) I am willing to work overtime:
  - as much as possible
  - frequently
  - occasionally
  - never

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- 8) For the right job I am:
- eager to relocate
  - willing to relocate
  - not able to relocate
  - not willing to relocate
- 9) I prefer a job that involves:
- a lot of travel
  - some travel
  - no travel
- 10) I want to work:
- full time
  - part time
  - temporary
- 11) List 5 things you like to do in your spare time.
- 12) What are your hobbies?
- 13) Are you more comfortable as a team member or a team leader?
- 14) Which of your past jobs did you like least? Why?
- 15) Which job did you like best? Why?
- 16) What kind of job would you do if you could choose any job?
- 17) What kind of training would you like to have, if any?

# Learn the Job Market

## Career Exploration

The closer the match between a job and your work preferences, financial needs, and transferable skills, the more likely you will be successful and happy in that job. Remember to search for the perfect job. But keep in mind; it is rare to find a perfect match in a job.

*The following is a list of ways you can do career exploration:*

- Library research
- Volunteer for an organization
- Employment counseling
- Read business magazines
- Attend training or apprenticeship programs
- Talk to friends and relatives about their work and careers
- Network with people you get to meet
- Informational interviews
- Job share
- Internships
- Job shadow
- Small Business Administration
- Employment agencies
- WorkSource Center
- Chamber of Commerce
- Better Business Bureau

## Effective Job Search Strategies

### Job Search Planning

*Now begin your job search and get organized!*

List your goals and objectives (short and long term). Develop a plan and a schedule to reach those goals and objectives and stick to them as much as possible. Be flexible – you may need to rework them occasionally.

List all possible sources of assistance, potential employers and other resources so that you have something to refer to when you need help. Keep a folder for all the job search informational materials that you acquire.

There are documentation requirements to accept a job offer that are unavoidable in the modern economy so you must be prepared before you start hunting. Current immigration laws impact all employers and job hunters throughout the United States. To get a job you will need to understand the Rules, Roles, and Responsibilities (the 3 R's) of the system.

- 1) The Rule is: Approved forms of picture identification and eligibility documentation are required to be legally eligible for employment. The most common form of picture identification is a driver's license or state issued identification card for non-drivers. The most common form of eligibility documentation for employment is an original Social Security Card.
- 2) Your Role is: To provide your prospective employer with original documents that verify who you are (picture identification) and your citizenship status (Social Security Card, and eligibility documentation for non-citizens).
- 3) Your Responsibility is: To identify and communicate your needs specific to the documentation required. Notify your classification counselor or pre-release program staff that you need to get an original Social Security Card or picture identification, and immigration documents for non-citizens. Making your needs known prior to release means you are ready to accept any job when offered to you.

### **Job Getting Strategies (listed in order of success rates):**

- Planned and researched approach provided in the Job Hunter workshop series (86% success rate).
- Partnering with a group of other job hunters (Job Clubs), as part of a team you can contact more employers covering a wider area or labor market and share the information with the group where the jobs are (84% success rate).
- Do the legwork yourself making in-person contacts with the local employers who hire individuals with your skills (69% success rate).
- Contact employers that are of interest to you (47% success rate).
- Establishing a "people" network and asking for job leads. This includes associating with employees already working where they may "hang out" after work or in a social setting where you can get to know more people (33% success rate).

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- Using temporary (no fee) employment agencies. You develop skills and build job leads, which can lead to a permanent job (29% success rate).
- Using the Internet to identify, research and contact employers (25% success rate).
- Checking jobs posted at the local WorkSource Center (14% success rate).
- Using local newspaper want ads (12% success rate).
- Day labor pools where employers pick out workers (8% success rate).
- Mass mailing resumes (7% success rate).
- Using a private (for fee) employment agency (5% success rate).

As you can see the strategies of job search vary widely in effectiveness and you should use a combination of strategies as needed to achieve success, find what works for you and where you live. Finding a good job really depends on your preparation, determination, and perseverance. It's not easy but always pays off.

You're hired! Job hunting is now your job where you will spend 30 to 40 hours per week engaged in your strategies, and certainly the more time you invest in your effort will be evident in your result. What you put into it, you'll get out of it; how much is your future going to be worth?

### **Time Management**

Time is a precious commodity you must use entirely to your advantage. Plan your days as though you had a job. Set a rigid schedule to begin your job search activities each day and get to work on time every day. Start using a weekly calendar listing all our goals to accomplish that week. Track each place you submit a resume or application and for what job. Not the names of everyone you meet, hand an application or resume to, where and how to contact them to follow up for more assistance. Remembering people's names and how to reach them is so important to build your contact network and a personal rapport where they get to know you and what jobs you are hunting. Reviewing back over your weekly calendar pages is a useful way to see if your efforts are bringing you closer to success. You'll spot trends and see which of your strategies is gaining the best results and where to concentrate more of your time and effort.

### **Networking with Others**

People are your most valuable resource on your job hunt, especially the people in your support and job contact networks. Your job search network is those individuals who get to know you and become familiar with your motivation to get a good job and make a decent life. These are the people who trust you have earned through mutual rapport based on respect and honest. Remember, you may be unemployed to start, but you still have a job ... looking for work, and it works both ways. In the near future you can become a job network contact for another. Very often you'll find it's not what you know, but whom you know that really counts. Finding where and with whom you fit makes all the difference and networking with others is how it's done.

## Effective Job Search Strategies

### Who to Network with for Support and Assistance

Individual Contacts	More Individual Contacts	Groups
Family	People you meet at the coffee shop	Personnel departments
Friends	People you meet on the bus	Job Clubs and WorkSource Centers
Friends of friends and family	Clergy	Chamber of Commerce lists
Employers	Attorneys	Rehab support groups
Former employers	Accountants	Social clubs
Former co-workers	Mail carriers	Civic groups
Former classmates	Grocery clerks	Sport leagues
Members of your church	Barbers	Veteran groups
People who provide services you use	Informational interviews	Community and trade shows

Always thank your network contact and let them know what happened as a result of their leads. Keep them updated about your job hunt, especially when you have good news to share. When you do get hired give a special thank you for the job lead.

### Step by Step Job Getting Mechanics

*To develop more job leads, I will:*

- 1) Ask friends and relatives about job openings and companies that do “my kind” of work.
- 2) Ask my former employer(s) about openings and companies that do my kind of work.
- 3) Check newspapers for job openings and plant expansions.
- 4) Ask employers I interview with about openings they might know of with other employers.
- 5) Use the Department of Economic Security WorkSource Centers.
- 6) Check with the Civil Service office (federal, state, local) about openings I might qualify for.
- 7) Work with school placement office.

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- 8) Check professional, trade and business magazines for openings that I may qualify for.
- 9) Contact local unions and apprenticeship programs.
- 10) Contact self-help organizations.

### *When contacting employers I will:*

- 1) Know something about the company, its products and services. You can find out from friends who work there; from the WorkSource Center, from the library, reference books, magazines, trade journals and newspapers.
- 2) Be prepared to state the job title I am applying for (e.g., secretary, warehouse worker, etc.), and why I think the company should select me for the job.
- 3) Remember the interviewer's name, and address him/her by name during the interview.
- 4) Thank the employer for the opportunity to interview and always ask when you can call back for his/her decision.
- 5) Be sure to emphasize my five greatest strengths: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6) Be prepared to ask as well as answer questions.
- 7) Be on time and dress for the interview in the manner that would be appropriate for an employee in the job I am applying for.
- 8) Immediately after the interview, analyze what went right and what went wrong so that I can be better prepared for my next interview.

### *When following up on a job I will:*

- 1) Do my follow-up immediately after each job lead.
- 2) Mention to the employer the name of the person who gave me the job lead.
- 3) Send a personal "thank-you note" for the interview addressed to the interviewer by name immediately after the interview.
- 4) Follow-up in person, by phone or letter only if the employer is out of the area or if the interview specifically requested a phone or letter follow-up.

## EX-OFFENDER EMPLOYMENT RE-ENTRY GUIDE

*To make the most of my job search efforts I will:*

- 1) Prepare a master application and effective resume.
- 2) Obtain letter of recommendation from: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
and \_\_\_\_\_.
- 3) Obtain letter(s) of reference from my former employer(s).
- 4) Develop a list of needs and the resources available to meet these needs.
- 5) Make a list of people who might be able to provide good job leads and earn their trust to be part of my networking contacts.
- 6) Research the company(s) that I have interviewed with.
- 7) Record the names of people that I talk with, their telephone numbers, addresses, dates of contact, results and any tips or leads; include when and how to follow up.
- 8) Make a file or folder with all the papers and documents I may need (e.g., licenses, DD-214, Social Security Card, certificates of training, diplomas, etc.).

### **“How Do I Go About Applying For a Job?”**

*“How shall I prepare?”*

*“What will I have to complete before I begin seeking employment interviews?”*

*“Nothing ever happens until the paperwork is done right.”*

*“Imagine looking at yourself on paper. Would an employer want to meet you?”*

#### **Objectives:**

- Complete a master application for employment.
- Prepare a formatted resume and “Quick” card worksheet.
- Learn how to write a cover letter.

#### **Overview:**

Many people think completing an employment application is a simple process. In reality, it is a screening device, used by employers to weed out applicants who don't follow directions, pay attention to details, or worry about neatness. The way an application is completed reflects one's willingness to take time to turn in a quality product, and shows the person's consideration for the reader. An application is really a pre-employment test. When a person doesn't complete it as requested, it may end up being discarded. On the other hand, a well-done application can lead to an immediate interview. There are documented cases of jobs being created for people, just because their applications were so attractive.

*You have to look good on paper to receive the consideration you want.*

## Applications and Resumes

### What Employers Look For When Hiring

Employers ranked these factors that they consider in making hiring decisions, and what they consider most important.

Attitude -----	46%
Communication skills -----	42%
Previous work experience -----	40%
Recommendations from current employees -----	34%
Previous employer recommendations -----	34%
Industry-based credentials -----	32%
Years of completed schooling -----	29%
Scores on test administered as part of interview -----	25%
Academic performance -----	25%
Experience or reputation of applicant's school -----	24%
Teacher recommendations -----	21%

(Source: U.S. Census Bureau National Survey)

### What Is It That Employers Want Most Of All?

Employers are looking for an employee who is job-ready and who possesses basic skills. Employers also want employees who will continue to show those characteristics daily on the job.

*A good employee is one who:*

1. Learns easily	9. Negotiates conflicts
2. Reads and writes well	10. Works as a team member
3. Uses computers well	11. Is organized
4. Listens carefully and speaks coherently	12. Exercises leadership
5. Strives for career development	13. Sets goals
6. Thinks creatively	14. Is self-motivated
7. Solves problems	15. Maintains self esteem
8. Gets along with others	16. Life-long learner

(Source: Workplace Basics: The Skills Employers Want, U.S. Department of Labor and American Society for Training and Development)

## **Applications and Resumes**

### **Classes You Took While Incarcerated**

Stating that you took Victims Awareness implies that you had victims. Stating that you took Stress and Anger Management implies that you have had difficulty managing your anger. These listings would raise red flags for any employer. Instead, word things in business language. For example, you could say that you took:

- Interpersonal Skills
- Communication Skills
- Self Management Skills
- GED
- Life Skills

Be sure to list the community college that offered the class, not the correctional institution where the class was located. Offender Employment Services classes should be listed by their name: Job Hunter, Work Ethics, Job Dynamics, etc.

### **Reason for Leaving Last Employer**

Many offenders have lost jobs because of being arrested or being fired or failing a drug test or not showing up for work. When listing your reasons for leaving, do not say that you were fired, quit, or that you were arrested and taken away. Below are examples of reasons for leaving that do not raise red flags of concern.

- Personal (now resolved)
- Will explain at interview
- Laid off or reduction in force
- Relocated
- Job ended
- Seasonal position
- Transportation issue (now resolved)
- Lack of hours/work
- Career change
- Promoted
- Took time off to care for an ill family member
- Family reasons (now resolved)

Be sure to use the reason that fits your unique circumstance. Remember, you must still be prepared to provide an explanation when asked in an interview.

# Applications and Resumes

## Filling Out Job Applications

### Disclosing a Felony Conviction

It is particularly important for offenders to be truthful in filling out applications. However, the truth must be told in a way for the offender to get screened-in and invited to a face-to-face interview.

**Question:**

“Have you ever been convicted of a felony?”       Yes       No

If yes, it is recommended the offender fill out the question as follows:

“Have you ever been convicted of a felony?”       Yes       No

If yes, please explain: Will explain at interview; I can be bonded.

*Below are some compelling reasons to answer the question in this way.*

- It allows you to be honest, yet protects your privacy by controlling who knows about the specific conviction.
- Stating the felony is not job related and the applicant is bondable may help calm the fears of the employer and perhaps even pique his/her curiosity enough to decide to interview you.
- Many Community Supervision Officers will tell an employer if you have a felony or not.
- If an employer is going to find out, it is better to hear it from you.
- You control the flow of information – how it’s worded, how it’s presented.
- Once hired, you don’t have to be constantly looking over your shoulder afraid someone will find out.
- Most employers do background checks.
- In the interview, you can talk about how productive you were in prison or jail.
- Employers can take advantage of Tax Credits and Federal Bonding.

*Below is a list of other options to answering this questions and probable consequences.*

**Check ‘YES’ and write the conviction.** The candidate would likely be screened out and would lose privacy because anyone in the office who saw the application would know about the conviction.

**Leave the question blank and/or put N/A.** The application would appear incomplete and it would appear the applicant is hiding something. When disclosing the felony at the interview, it would be awkward to explain why the questions are not filled in truthfully.

## EX-OFFENDER EMPLOYMENT RE-ENTRY GUIDE

**Check ‘NO’ and lie.** This appears to be the easiest route and may help you get a job for the short term, but the long-term consequences may destroy short-term gain. Consequences include:

- Not being hired because the lie was found out.
- Being fired as soon as the background check comes back.
- Carrying around emotional baggage wondering when you will be found out.
- Reinforcing offender stereotypes.
- Prosecution – especially if offender applied for a federal job.

Most employers do background checks before employees are promoted. So if an offender lied on the application, stayed with the company for a few years, became eligible for promotion, and the lie was exposed, the offender could:

- Lose a good job.
- Lose a good reference.
- Lose financial stability.
- Lose self-esteem.

### **Question:**

“Have you been convicted of a crime within the past ten years that directly relates to the position for which you are applying?”  Yes  No

If the crime you have been convicted of has no direct relationship to the position for which you are applying you may answer “no”. However, if the answer is “yes” you should mark “yes”.

Example: You were convicted of forgery, and you are applying for a job as a bank teller. You would answer “yes” because your conviction has a direct relationship to the bank teller position.

### **Question:**

What should I write if the question about conviction asks me to “explain”?

Always write “will explain at interview”. This will keep everyone who may view your application from knowing your personal business.

### **Question:**

How do I cover time in prison or jail on the “Work Experience” portion of the application? List only 2 or 3 of the jobs that may be in line with your future employment goals. If you did any work during your incarceration (janitor, cook, clerk, firefighter, etc.) submit the jobs where you gained significant hands-on experience. During your incarceration, choose the jobs to describe that reflect skills gained, abilities developed, and accomplishments earned.

Example: If you worked both in the kitchen and as a janitor while incarcerated, you would indicate both jobs for your incarceration period and list only the year for dates of employment even though you may have moved from facility to facility and from job to job.

### **Question:**

How do I complete the “business name”?

Use the abbreviated name of jail or corrections facility.

## EX-OFFENDER EMPLOYMENT RE-ENTRY GUIDE

### **Question:**

How about completing the “salary” portion of Job Experience?

You should complete wage or salary by stating “stipend” on your application.

### **Question:**

What about completing the “address” portion of Job History?

Do not use P.O. Boxes. Use only the city and state as the address, or only list the street address of the institution. The reason is that some people associate P.O. Boxes with prison or jail in certain towns.

### **Question:**

What about phone numbers for previous employers?

Obtain permission to list your last work supervisor’s direct contact phone number. If you don’t know it, research it, write a letter for the phone number and request permission from the person responsible who oversaw your work or duties. If it’s not possible to obtain a direct phone number to an individual, list the main phone number of the facility, or as a last resort list “unknown” as the contact phone number.

If previous private employers are no longer in business, state that as the phone number. Collecting accurate phone numbers is important to make it easy for the employer to verify past jobs. If it’s too difficult, the employer may get frustrated and bypass the rest of your application, moving to the next one.

### **Question:**

How to complete the “reason for leaving” portion of Work Experience?

Correct responses can be “relocated,” “contract ended,” “transferred,” or “pursued other opportunities”.

What follows is an example of a Work Experience response. Please note the reason for completing the Work Experience portion this way is to get your application past whomever may be screening applications for interviews. It is vital that your work experience is complete, yet don’t advertise your incarceration. That information is only between you and the interviewer, not anyone who may see your application.

Example:      WORK EXPERIENCE SECTION  
Name:              Florence East  
Address:           Florence, AZ  
Supervisor:        N/A  
Dates:              From June 1, 2004 to July 20, 2006  
Position:           Cook              Rate of Pay:    Hourly wage  
Reason for leaving: Relocated

## **References**

References are people you know who can tell employers about who you are and what you can do. References confirm the information on your employment application and/or resume. They also support your character, skills, accomplishments, and work habits. Having good things that are said about you from another person is reassuring to the employer. Ask permission before

## EX-OFFENDER EMPLOYMENT RE-ENTRY GUIDE

listing a person as a reference, and okay it to refer an employer to call them. Ask your references for their business cards to have all their correct contact information.

The references you list on your job application and/or resume will more than likely receive a telephone call from prospective employers. **Make sure you talk with your reference in advance**, so they will prepare for the employer's call. Keep your references up-to-date on all your job hunting activities, especially good news about going to work. Thank them sincerely for all their support and again ask them to continue being a reference as you compete for better jobs. A good reference is as good as gold.

### **Types of References**

The people you choose to ask to be listed for references depend upon your experiences, job goals, and the position you're seeking. If you are an experienced worker use these references:

- Previous bosses and supervisors
- People you may have supervised
- Former fellow workers

If you are a job hunter re-entering the work force use these references:

- Members or leaders of groups you belong to (community, religious groups, etc.)
- Supervisors from a part-time or full-time job
- Teachers

If you are entering the work force for the first time use these references:

- Personal friends
- Counselors
- Doctors, teachers, lawyers
- Landlords
- People you have been involved with in volunteer projects

# Applications and Resumes

## Power Words for Resumes

accompanied	conducted	estimated	inventoried	performed	retrieved
accumulated	conferred	evaluated	investigated	piloted	revised
achieved	constructed	examined	invoiced	placed	routed
acquired	consulted	exchanged	issued	planned	scheduled
administered	contacted	exerted	judged	posted	secured
admitted	contracted	exhibited	justified	prepared	sent
advised	contrasted	experienced	kept	prescribed	separated
aided	controlled	expanded	learned	presented	served
allowed	converted	fabricated	lectured	priced	serviced
analyzed	convinced	facilitated	led	printed	set up
answered	coordinated	fed	licensed	processed	showed
applied	copied	figured	listened	produced	sold
appointed	corrected	filed	listed	programmed	solicited
appraised	corresponded	filled	loaded	promoted	sorted
arranged	counseled	financed	located	prompted	stocked
assembled	counted	finished	logged	proofread	stored
assessed	created	fired	mailed	proposed	strive
assigned	debated	fitted	maintained	proved	summarized
assisted	decided	fixed	managed	provided	supervised
attached	delivered	formulated	manufactured	published	supplied
attended	demonstrated	founded	marked	purchased	tallied
authorized	deposited	governed	marketed	ran	taught
balanced	described	graded	measured	rated	tested
billed	designed	graphed	met	read	telephoned
bought	detailed	greeted	modified	rearranged	transferred
budgeted	determined	handled	monitored	rebuilt	transport
built	developed	headed	motivated	recalled	tutored
calculated	devised	helped	negotiated	received	typed
cashied	diagnosed	hired	nominated	recommended	verified
cataloged	discovered	identified	noted	reconciled	
changed	dismantled	implemented	notified	recorded	
charged	dispatched	improved	numbered	reduced	
charted	dispensed	improvised	observed	referred	
checked	displaced	increased	obtained	registered	
classified	directed	indexed	opened	regulated	
cleaned	distributed	indicated	operated	related	
cleared	documented	informed	ordered	relayed	
closed	drew	initiated	organized	renewed	
coded	drove	inspected	outlined	reorganized	
collected	earned	installed	overcame	repaired	
commanded	educated	instructed	packaged	replaced	
communicated	employed	insured	packed	reported	
compiled	encouraged	integrated	paid	requested	
completed	engineered	interpreted	participated	researched	
composed	entertained	interviewed	patrolled	reserved	
computed	established	introduced	perfected	responsible	

# Interviewing

## Incarceration Speech

- There is something you have the right to know:
- In (year)\_\_\_\_\_, I made a mistake and was convicted of \_\_\_\_\_.
- At the time my judgment was clouded by \_\_\_\_\_.
- But I am putting that behind me now!
- I admit that this was a serious error in my judgment and **I want to assure you that I have changed.**

Key words saying how: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

- I worked while I was incarcerated as a \_\_\_\_\_ and learned how to:

Key words: \_\_\_\_\_

- There are some advantages you are eligible for if you decide to hire me.
  1. I can be bonded up to \$50,000.
  2. As an employer, you are eligible for a Work Opportunities Tax Credit (WOTC). You would be eligible to receive up to a \$2,400 federal credit for the first \$6,000 in wages you pay me.
- I am aware that my past actions may cause you to question my judgment, but **I am prepared to do whatever it takes to prove myself to be a reliable and capable employee.**

Key words saying how: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## EX-OFFENDER EMPLOYMENT RE-ENTRY GUIDE

*The trick to answering questions regarding incarceration is to TELL THE TRUTH!*

1. Accept responsibility for what you did: “I can’t blame anyone other than myself for what I did.”
2. Briefly identify one reason for your action: “I do know that the people I spent most of my time with influenced me a lot and I did what they all did ... just to hang around them.”
3. Limit the amount of detail you provide: “I know; it sounds simple, but there is not much more to it than that.”

What can an employer ask about my doing time?

Almost everyone has some interest in knowing about the “other side” of life. The same may be true of interviewers. They’re interested in an “inside look” at jail life. It makes great stories when they are talking to other people.

1. Indicate lack of fun: “I’m sure you understand that jail is not a place where most people want to be.”
2. Simply state what a “working day” in jail is like. “I had to wake up at 5:30 each morning, if I wanted to eat. Then I prepared for work. After that, it was pretty much like any other job. I had to meet the production quotas, do good work and follow the directions of the supervisors ... or else I didn’t get paid or wasn’t allowed to stay on the job.”
3. Relate jail work to competitive work: “In fact, a workday in jail is not too much different than a workday on the outside.”

Prospective employers can inquire about arrests; whether charges are still pending, have been dismissed, or led to conviction of a crime involving behavior which would adversely affect job performance. Inquiries concerning convictions or imprisonment will be considered to be justified by business necessity if the crimes inquired about relate reasonably to the job duties, and such convictions (or release from prison or jail) occurred within the last ten years.

**CAUTION:** Don’t let the employer drag you into talking in detail or at length about what goes on in an institution. That is not the purpose of your interview session.

- **Keep your answers simple and clear (vague answers sound like you’re hiding things...)**
- **Keep your answers brief**
- **Keep your dignity.**

## **ONE STOP CAREER CENTERS**

***They are one of the best resources available to anybody looking for a job!***

**Here are some of the free services that they provide:**

- They give referrals for jobs based upon the applicant's skills and experience.
- They help set up interviews.
- They do resume writing for those who need help or do not have a computer.
- They provide useful tips, information, and up-to-date job market overview and analysis.

**These are some things you can do at a One Stop Center:**

- Set up a surety bond for employment. (See Federal Bonding Package)
- Look for a better job while working at your present employment.
- Surf the Internet, check your email, use fax machines, or work with a counselor.
- Pick up information and funding options for vocational training or college.

**Where to find a One Stop Center:**

- There are several different locations in Arizona listed below, but the best way to locate one is by calling the toll-free number to the Federal Bonding Program. They will direct you to the nearest One Stop Center or a similar type of program anywhere in the United States.

## **America's ServiceLocator**

**[www.servicelocator.org](http://www.servicelocator.org)**

**America's Service Locator (ASL) connects you to local offices where you can find employment, training, and other important resources. Local One Stop Career Centers are also listed. You can also call toll free: 1-877-US-2JOBS for direct assistance.**

### **Phoenix Arizona Area One Stop Centers (2005)**

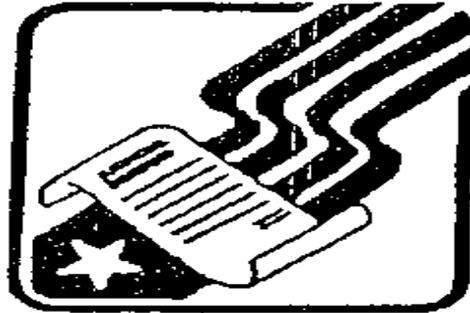
**Gilbert**  
**735 N. Gilbert Road Suite 134**  
**(480) 497-0350**

**Mesa**  
**163 N. Dobson Road**  
**(480) 962-7678**

**Peoria**  
**9770 W. Peoria Avenue**  
**(623) 934-3231**

**Phoenix**  
**9801 N. Seventh Street**  
**(602) 861-0208**

***Federal Bonding***



# Program

**UNIQUE JOB PLACEMENT TOOL**

Answers to Questions About Fidelity Bonding

- **WHAT IS IT?**
- **WHY IS IT NEEDED?**
- **WHO IS ELIGIBLE?**
- **HOW IS IT ISSUED?**
- **HAS IT HAD SUCCESS?**

**SPONSORED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF LABOR**

**For Further Information**

**Contact RON RUBBIN at 1-800-233-2258 or [www.bonds4jobs.com](http://www.bonds4jobs.com)**

## **UNIQUE JOB PLACEMENT TOOL**

### **WHAT IS FIDELITY BONDING?**

- Insurance Covering Employee Dishonesty
- Guarantee for Worker “Job Honesty”

### **BONDING IS BARRIER TO EMPLOYMENT FOR:**

- Ex-Offenders (arrest record)
- Welfare Recipients (credit risk)
- Recovering Substance Abusers.
- Disadvantaged Youth (lack work history)

**(THESE GROUPS ARE ROUTINELY DENIED JOBS DUE TO THEIR BEING NOT COMMERCIALY BONDABLE)**

### **FEDERAL BONDING PROGRAM IS SPONSORED BY U.S. DEPT. LABOR & TRAVELERS INSUR. CO.**

- Employer Gets Free Bond: Job-Hire Incentive
- Program Bonds Any “At-Risk” Applicant
- Eliminates Bonding As Employment Barrier
- Employer Gets Skills Without Taking Risk

### **USERS OF BONDING SERVICES**

- One-Stop Career Centers
- Welfare-to-Work Programs
- Offender Placement Centers
- State Labor Exchange Offices
- WIA Service Deliverers

## **FIDELITY BONDING JOB PLACEMENT (ONE-STOP CENTER RESOURCE)**

### **DEMONSTRATED SUCCESS**

- 41,000 Job Placements
- 99% Success Rate
- Eliminates Barrier to Employment
- Effective Employer Job-Hire Incentive
- Expanded Access to Job Openings

## EX-OFFENDER EMPLOYMENT RE-ENTRY GUIDE

- Improved Service Delivery Efficiency
- Generates Taxpayers & Reduces Tax Users
- Proven Impact-Texas saves \$10M annually
- Practitioner Oriented-Instant Bond Issuance

### **ASSISTS HARDEST-TO-PLACE JOB APPLICANTS**

- Ex-Offenders
- Recovering Addicts
- Welfare Recipients
- Disadvantaged Youth

### **FEDERAL RECOGNITION**

- US. Department of Labor
- U.S. Department of Justice
- U.S. Department of Education
- U.S. Probation Office
- U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION:**

- RON RUBBIN 1-800-233-2258 or rrubbin~mclaughlin-on-line.com
- Department of Labor website [www.doleta.gov](http://www.doleta.gov)
- McLaughlin Co. website [www.bonds4jobs.com](http://www.bonds4jobs.com)

## **FIDELITY BOND CERTIFICATION FORM**

(See next page for Operational Definitions)

**MAIL TO: THE McLAUGHLIN COMPANY**  
1725 DeSales Street, NW - Suite 700  
Washington, DC 20036

**Phone Inquires: 1-888-BONDJOB**  
**Website: bonds4jobs.com**