



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
INTEROFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

To James L. Sullivan

Date May 22, 1981

From Tim Reidy

Reference

Subject Job Factory

Enclosed is a copy of the pamphlet I showed to you recently which highlights the Job Factory. There are many job search education programs now operating across the country; Job Factory was among the first and, now, one of the most "famous".

This pamphlet has been distributed to Private Industry Councils (PICs) nationally; further, a much longer and more detailed version of this monograph is being distributed to every CETA organization in the country. I have seldom seen an activity operated by a local program like ours featured in such a way by an "official DOL publication".

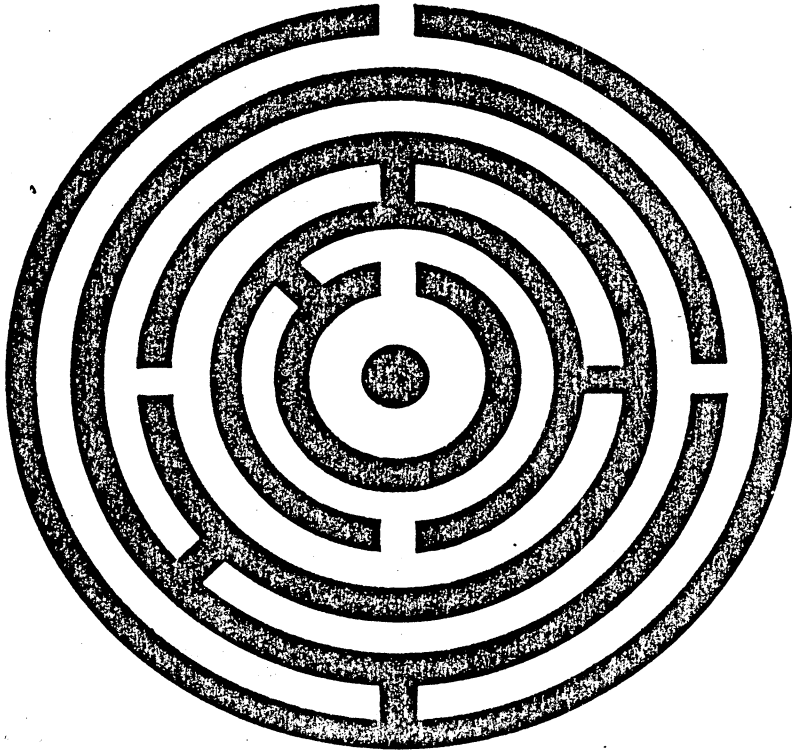
The Job Factory has proven to be our only "silver lining" in the CETA cutbacks. We are now getting many inquiries about our use of Job Factory for PSE participants being laid off. We are also getting many inquiries about "Retraining". Both Job Factory and Retraining are programs expected to help minimize the impact of the PSE layoffs.

In this regard, you should know how doing this training reflects very positively on the City Administration. A common theme today is that a good CETA program is a very definitive indication of an effective city government. Our providing training to our counterparts nationally (which is in itself unusual: DOL usually hires ABT or someone like that) is a good sales pitch for the effectiveness of the government of this city.

Self-Directed Job Search: An Introduction



U.S. Department of Labor
Employment and Training Administration



Self-Directed Job Search: An Introduction

U.S. Department of Labor
Ray Marshall, Secretary

Employment and Training Administration
Ernest G. Green
Assistant Secretary for Employment
and Training
1980



SELF-DIRECTED JOB SEARCH: AN INTRODUCTION

For

**Private Industry Council
Members**

PREFATORY NOTE

This publication provides a brief introduction to a self-help job finding procedure which can be used successfully by persons in programs funded under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act. This part has been written specifically for members of Private Industry Councils. It is informative without being verbose, providing a succinct description of the job finding procedure and its advantages, limitations and possible uses. A perusal requires no more than ten minutes. Additional and more detailed information may be obtained by reading the part written for Private Industry Council staff.

The information contained herein is the result of the input and cooperation of many people. This includes those who shared unpublished papers and perceptive discussions, answered various questions over the telephone and supplied printed materials, made suggestions, and read and critiqued drafts. I wish to thank in particular Robert Wegmann, Bonnie Coe, and Jim Zurer for supplying many of the leads which led to my gathering the information summarized in this document. I am particularly indebted to Dr. Wegmann for his helpful discussions. To all I would like to express my sincere appreciation for their interest and assistance.

Bart F. Kennedy
September, 1980

SELF-DIRECTED JOB SEARCH: AN INTRODUCTION

Introduction

At a White House dinner with business, labor, and community leaders in May, 1978, President Carter announced the Private Sector Initiatives Program (PSIP). In October that year Congress amended the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act (CETA) to establish the Private Sector Initiatives Program as a vital component of the CETA program. This legislation gave a pivotal role to Private Industry Councils (PIC) as a source of direction for a "new" CETA which reflected private sector perspectives.

The new legislation contained three major goals for the Private Sector Initiatives Program which the Private Industry Council uses for general direction:

Increase the involvement of the business community . . . in employment and training activities.

Increase private sector employment opportunities for unemployed or underemployed persons who are economically disadvantaged.

Test and demonstrate the effectiveness of a variety of specific program activities in pursuing the first two objectives.

The task before Private Industry Councils is to recommend programs and activities to the local prime sponsor which give concrete expression to these general goals. Without question, each of the approximately 470 PIC's is approaching this in a slightly different way. The transformation of general national goals into operational local programs is achieved neither quickly nor easily. A great deal of effort, thought, patience, and—perhaps— even compromise is required.

The purpose of this publication is to describe one activity — **Self-Directed Job Search** — which can assist Private Industry Councils in achieving, at least in part, two of the goals of PSIP:

Increase private sector employment opportunities for the economically disadvantaged.

Test and demonstrate the effectiveness of a variety of activities.

SELF-DIRECTED JOB SEARCH

Across the United States, job search training programs are providing individuals with the information and training to undertake for themselves the task of finding a job. These programs have received little recognition until recently and, as a result, most employment and training professionals are unfamiliar with the concepts behind them.

Though comparatively new, these programs have demonstrated a high rate of success in putting people to work in unsubsidized jobs in a minimum period of time at a reasonable cost. The program's simplicity and reliance on participants to perform the actual job search is a sharp contrast with traditional government sponsored activities. In addition, there are no real barriers to operating such a program for people from a variety of economic, social and educational backgrounds.

First and foremost, this is a *self-help* activity: participants assume primary responsibility for their employment status. Participants initiate their own job search activity, aided by appropriate information, encouragement, discipline, and support from a trained staff. These are not just "helping" activities; they structure an "environment" which helps people to help themselves.

Self-Directed Job Search is a planned activity which informs, instructs, motivates, and provides practical experience to job seekers.

They learn how to identify, initiate contact, and interview prospective employers in order to find a job for themselves. The burden of responsibility is placed on the job seeker to identify and solicit employment through a serious, intensive job search. Participants develop an expectation that they *can* and *should* find a job. This "Help Yourself" attitude creates an opportunity for sustained, productive employment. **Self-Directed Job Search** places the concept of self-help within an environment of *support* and *positive reinforcement*. Participants actually practice contacting employers, securing an appointment, and conducting an interview. Only a few days of job search training is spent in a classroom setting while subsequent time is spent actually looking for a job. In brief, the participants "job" is to find a job!

A **Self-Directed Job Search** program is generally organized as a small group (10-15 persons) under supervision of trained staff. Typically, the program lasts two to four weeks. The focus is on developing job leads, penetrating employer "screens", interviewing, and following up on interviews. Participants learn to ascertain how they can be an asset to an employer and, most important, how to communicate this effectively in an interview. There is constant motivation toward attitudes and behaviors which increase the likelihood of a successful job search.

Usually the first week of training

is devoted to setting a level of expectation on performance, motivation, molding the group into a "social resource", goal setting, and an introduction to the job search itself. The emphasis is on learning by doing, using a variety of techniques such as role playing and simulations. Feedback tends to be immediate and constructive to facilitate acquisition of job search skills and develop a positive self image that builds confidence.

Attendance and performance standards are strictly enforced. Persons failing to take seriously their job search efforts are "fired" since their "job" is to find a job. Those who drop out usually do so at the beginning when they discover the program is intensive, requiring a serious effort.

Although the group setting is not a mandatory component of self-directed job search, it adds an extra dimension to the activity which makes a qualitative difference in the

process. A group of job seekers, with proper guidance, becomes a dynamic resource from which its member draw ideas, encouragement, support and challenge. When properly handled, it is peer pressure at its best. A job search is inherently lonely and discouraging, even under the best of circumstances, but a job search in a dynamic group setting makes the task seem easier and may be a pivotal factor in the overall results. In unity there is strength.

The expectation of self-help and individual initiative combined with upbeat positive support and instruction in a group setting sets self-directed job search apart from the usual approaches to placing economically disadvantaged persons in jobs. Although the elements of self-directed job search are not novel, the dynamics of self-help and group interaction have produced significant results, as evidenced by two of the pioneer programs.



TWO SELF-DIRECTED JOB SEARCH PROGRAMS

The Job Factory

The Job Factory is operated by the Cambridge (Massachusetts) Office of Manpower Affairs. The program was operated on a trial basis in 1976 and introduced to the regular service mix of CETA activities in 1977.

Barriers to employment among the economically disadvantaged population were studied and the backgrounds of some did not indicate significant hindrances to competing successfully for semi-skilled or unskilled jobs. It appeared that their job search efforts were deficient, both in quality and quantity; basically, they were ineffectual at helping themselves. The causes for this appeared to be largely superficial. It appeared that they were impeded by the following factors.

- lack of knowledge of effective methods of finding a job;
- lack of communication skills to present themselves to employers as desirable applicants;
- lack of confidence, drive, realistic job goals, and perhaps honest motivation to launch an intensive job search.

The "Job Factory" is an intensive workshop designed to address these deficiencies. For approximately four weeks, participants are enrolled in small groups (10-15 people) headed by a "foreman" and are expected to follow industry-like work discipline throughout the duration of the pro-

gram. They are given guidance in job search approaches, resume writing, interviewing techniques, and supported through the provision of telephones, typing, and duplicating services. The participants' "job" is to find themselves a job. Only the first few days are spent in classroom-type activities. Subsequent time is devoted to intensive (full-time), supervised job search.

The experience of the first Job Factory training is illustrative of the overall success of the program. Of the 34 people enrolled, 26 obtained employment; a 76.5% success rate. Only two persons who stayed with the program for the full four weeks failed to find jobs. Twenty-five of the 26 people who had secured a job through their own efforts were still employed at the end of thirty days. These individuals are contributing in excess of \$20,000 annually in state and federal taxes; the program of all 34 participants cost CETA \$15,000. If the workers had remained jobless, unemployment insurance payments could have reached \$95,000 a year.

Between 60 and 70 percent of all Job Factory participants have been able to find jobs within the four week period. As of March 1979, the Job Factory has a cumulative 66% placement rate within 30 days of a participant's entrance. Others have secured employment after the four week period on leads developed in the Job Factory. The average cost

per placement is less than \$600. Perhaps it is not inconsequential that the placement rate of all other CETA training activities in the area for a comparable period of time was 40% and considerably more expensive.

The Job Finding Club

The Job Finding Club was pioneered by Dr. N.H. Azrin, a psychologist, in an experimental study conducted in Carbondale, Illinois. He viewed job search as a complex event involving social factors, motivational factors, informational factors, and skill factors. Accordingly, he structured an intensive learning situation to facilitate the comprehension of job finding techniques and to continue the process until a job was obtained.

The first group of participants utilizing the new job finding procedure under experimental conditions represented a cross-section of the unemployed full-time job seekers. At the end of 30 days, 65% of the new-procedure job seekers had found employment compared to about 35% of the control group. After three months, only 7% of the individuals using the new job search procedure were still unemployed while approximately 40% of the job seekers in the control group had not secured employment. The new procedure clearly and impressively demonstrated its effectiveness. The median time for securing full-time employment for those using the new procedure was two weeks in comparison with eight weeks for the average job seeker in the control group. The new procedure, in summary, produced full-time employment for a greater proportion of participants and in a much shorter

period of time. And the cost proved to be most economical.

These were, indeed, impressive results. So impressive in fact, that the Work Incentive Program (WIN) of the Department of Labor funded five pilot projects in 1976-77, to test the feasibility of the Job Finding Club technique as an operational job search procedure for the WIN Program. Dr. Azrin was the principal investigator and Robert Philip served as the Project Coordinator. The first site began operation in October, 1976, while the final site initiated operations in September of 1977. Each site involved a job club conducted by local WIN staff and a control group. Individuals were randomly assigned to the job club or to normal WIN services (the control).

Participants in the Job Club engaged in job search full-time. They were provided with the necessary support (such as telephone, newspaper ads, writing materials, and so forth), and were encouraged to contact friends and relatives in locating job leads. Participants were, of course, a member of a group structured to give mutual support and assistance. Training in telephone use and interviewing skills was provided. There was explicit emphasis on the personal and social skills of the individual and the role in effectively communicating this in an interview.

Almost 1,000 WIN clients participated in either a job club or a control group. Members in both the Job Club or the Control had comparable demographic characteristics.

The Job Club was almost twice as effective in obtaining employment: 62% compared to 33% for the Control group during the entire demonstration period. These results

include the no shows and drop-outs. If they are excluded, the data on those who completed show the clear effectiveness of the Job Club procedures. While 80% of the Job Club participants secured employment, only 46% of the Control members obtained a job. Though the two groups showed little difference in the types of job obtained, Job Club members were able to find more jobs and find them faster.

THE BOTTOM LINE: RESULTS

Self-Directed Job Search is different from other placement efforts for the economically disadvantaged in its results and in the process which effects those results. Other placement procedures may cover certain aspects of job search, but generally they do not display the depth, dimensions, or dynamics of **Self-Directed Job Search**.

The bottom line, regardless of the differences in process, is the results produced by self-directed job search. The brief discussion of the Job Factory and the Job Finding Club indicates that self-directed job search produces results. Self-directed job search programs tend to produce a higher percentage of placements at a lower cost with greater efficiency than conventional placement approaches. Placement rates typically run higher than other job search approaches, generally twice as high. On the average, members of a self-directed job search program will find an unsubsidized job in less time than persons who employ more traditional means of locating employment. While overall costs of self-directed job search vary according to the extent of support provided, and the locale (urban or rural), it is always competitive and generally more economical.

Another interesting and perhaps significant benefit of self-directed job search programs is the change in attitude, disposition, and confidence which participants are reported to have experienced. Persons who have managed these programs and interested observers of such programs concur. Participants enter the activity sceptical, confused, even discouraged, and leave with a renewed sense of hope and confidence. They believe they will find a job and set out to do it.

LIMITATIONS

Although **Self-Directed Job Search** programs have generated impressive results and hold promise of significantly augmenting conventional placement procedures, they are not without problems and difficulties.

A very real problem, though not necessarily an obvious one, is the beguiling simplicity and easy comprehension of the structure which overshadows the significance of the process. The basic elements are readily grasped: information on job search; skill building relative to job search; and support during job search, including the group setting in which all of this occurs. Most job search approaches provide information, some offer limited "training," and still fewer provide extensive support. Nevertheless, because the content of other procedures are similar *on the surface*, typical responses to **Self-Directed Job Search** are: "Sounds interesting. I think we can use *parts* of it in our program." Or, "What's so new about it?" There is the tendency, in other words, to perceive it in terms of other approaches to job search. Thus, the differences are "screened out" and the broad similarities are retained. But it is precisely these differences which make the difference in results.

A second limitation is that this type of job search training is not appropriate for everyone. This is not, however, a major obstacle. Some participants, for whatever reasons, fail to show up for the first session while others drop out after only a few

meetings; in some instances, because the required level of effort is demanding. **Self-Directed Job Search** is primarily for those who: (1) do not have deep social/psychological problems; (2) seek jobs for which they have skills or the potential of learning those skills; (3) want employment. Fortunately, a majority of the CETA eligible population meet these requirements.

A third restriction is that these programs do not provide an in-depth vocational assessment of the participants. Generally, very little time is devoted to extensive discussion of which set of skills is best matched with specified occupational groupings. However, participants analyze their past employment and current strengths which can be described on a functional resume and used in their job search. For most participants comprehensive vocational assessment is not an issue: they know what work they have done in the past and have a general idea of what kind of work they would like.

A fourth problem is the logistics associated with a new undertaking. Space and equipment must be procured; telephones have to be installed; materials not ordinarily used in job search must be obtained; staff must be secured and trained; financial systems must be put in place. All of this takes both time and money. Programs should anticipate weak results until staff have acquired some practical experience in conducting **Self-Directed Job Search**.

Despite these difficulties, **Self-Directed Job Search** has the potential of addressing several aspects of the unemployment problem. First, it can put people to work and provide a sense of self-sufficiency. By putting

people to work promptly, it can reduce welfare and unemployment insurance payments, and increase tax revenues. In addition, it offers a useful complement to conventional placement procedures.

HOW CAN WE USE IT?

The answer to that question must be decided by each PIC in consultation with its prime sponsor. The decision to implement a **Self-Directed Job Search** program will be influenced by a variety of factors and issues unique to each locality, including the priorities established by each PIC. However, the versatility of the program affords a variety of applications.

Even though **Self-Directed Job Search** emphasizes developing one's own job leads and seeking unsubsidized employment, it ties in nicely with existing programs. The local Employment Service office is a repository of job leads and labor market information. Utilization of this resource is a natural for anyone actively engaged in job search and should not be overlooked.

Not everyone participating in a **Self-Directed Job Search** activity will be successful in locating unsubsidized employment. Some will heed a "kicker" which could be in the form of a Targeted Jobs Tax Credit (TJTC). An employer hiring persons from designated groups of the population is eligible to receive a tax credit equal to 50% of the first-year wages up to \$6,000. The maximum allowable credit for the first year is \$3,000, and is \$1,500 for the second year. Sometimes this added incentive is what an employer needs to hire someone who does not have precisely the desired skills. The TJTC voucher can be an effective "tool" for use by some participants in securing employment.

Secondly, **Self-Directed Job Search** is not limited to one particular group of people. It seems to work equally well with the educated and uneducated, adults and youth, female and male. The application of this program to young job seekers has provided some promising results. A recent program in Chicago had over 90% of the participants obtain employment within two weeks of the first meeting. Another program for youth in Cambridge, Massachusetts, served 175 CETA-eligible youth of which 55% were able to find full-time, unsubsidized employment.

The Houston (Texas) Ex-Offender Program operated between January, 1977 and December, 1979 with very favorable results. Ex-offenders learned how and when to discuss their prison records, and how to present themselves to employers as goal-directed, responsible individuals. While available job leads were passed on to participants, the emphasis of the workshop was to teach them to conduct self-directed job search. Of the 719 ex-offenders enrolled, 583, or 81%, found employment.

In Milwaukee County, Wisconsin, General Assistance has given way to the Work Assistance Program in which there is heavy reliance upon self-directed job search. Persons who apply for welfare are assigned to a job club where they are taught to conduct their own job search. Individuals who refuse a job paying more than the General Assistance payment are automatically removed from the General Assistance roll. Since 1977, the General Assistance roll has been reduced to under 2,000 from approximately 7,000.

Thirdly, there is a great deal of flexibility in where self-directed job search is positioned in the sequence of employment training activities. The positioning—at the front and/or back end—will be decided by careful consideration of a number of factors; the availability of training funds, Public Service Employment (PSE) funding, program priorities, and the local economy, to name several. Self-directed job search appears to work well whether it is an entry component to training or an exit component after training has been completed.

Self-Directed Job Search has a great deal of flexibility in its application to various groups and utilization in programs funded under the Comprehensive Employment and Training Act. Thus each Private Industry Council can probably find several ways the program could be applied to expedite unsubsidized employment for the economically disadvantaged. The key question, then, may not be, "How can we use it?" but rather, "When will we use it?"



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

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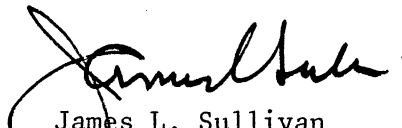
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
JAMES L. SULLIVAN
City Manager

June 1, 1981

To the Honorable, the City Council:

Enclosed for your information is a copy of a communication from Tim Reidy, Director of COMA, relative to the success of Cambridge's Job Factory.

Very truly yours,



James L. Sullivan
City Manager

JLS/mbf
Enc.

Agenda # 8 S-328

Success of the Cambridge's Job Factory.

In City Council,

~~June 1, 1981~~

June 8, 1981

6/8/81

Placed on File -