



Setting a Plan

Planning is preparing a sequence of action steps to achieve some specific goal. Remember, a plan is like a map. When following a plan, you can always see how much you have progressed towards your project goal and how far you are from your destination. Knowing where you are is essential for making good decisions on where to go or what to do next.¹

Identifying and overcoming barriers to employment

In preparation for searching for work, solutions should be found for any potential barriers to employment. Barriers are any conditions that may make employment difficult. Things such as: lacking adequate housing, clothing, food, or limited English speaking ability, a criminal record, or a lack of education, work experience, credentials, transportation or child care arrangements. Barriers can directly impact your success in finding employment. Therefore, as you begin to plan your search for work, you need to start by coming up with workable solutions and goals for overcoming any employment barriers that exist. When barriers exist, you need to seek or ask for help to find ways to resolve them. There are multiple resources available in your local community and throughout the State. Some of these resources have been identified for you in Appendix III.

Looking for a Job is Work

Looking for work can be a lot of work! You will have the most success – and a shorter length of unemployment – if you start looking for work early and stay on task.

- Identify realistic, short-term steps toward your goal (a certain number of calls or contacts per day).
- Establish a schedule and deadlines (I will revise my resume by the end of this week; I will conduct internet searches to identify 10 companies that may have jobs matching my skills by next Wednesday; etc.).
- Put your time and energy into looking for jobs you truly want and are qualified for.
- Reward yourself for accomplishing your goals. This will help you stay motivated.
- Let each success propel you to the next step.



You've heard the sayings "A goal without a plan is just a wish." or "A plan without action is just a dream." Well...it's true. So, let's get to work!



1. Goal

Define a SMART goal: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-bound. Take some time to think about the questions below. Then write down your goal in the space provided below.

- What do you want to achieve? Remember, be specific. What you want probably goes beyond just “finding a job.” For example, do you want to find a job that supports just you or you and your family? Do you want a job that affords you a certain lifestyle? Do you want a job in a specific location?
- How will you know that you’ve obtained the job you’ve set out to find? For example: “I will be able to support myself without having to depend on other people” or “I will no longer have to commute unreasonable amounts of time every day.”
- Is the job you’re looking for attainable/readily available to you in the area in which you will be looking for work? For example, it may be hard to find a job as a marine biologist if you live in Berlin, NH.
- Is the goal you’ve set relevant? Will it meet your needs?
- Can you achieve your goal utilizing your current skills?
- Do you have barriers to employment that need to be addressed?
- Setting due dates as part of your goals establishes a sense of urgency. By what date do you want to start your new job?

2. Actions

We recommend that you use the Table of Contents in this document as a guide for developing your reemployment plan. Even if you have searched successfully for work before, we think a review of all these topics is valuable. At a minimum, write down all the areas you may need to brush up on to achieve your goal. Be honest with yourself! Select as many sections as you need. If you haven’t looked for a job in a long time, you may want to consider all sections. If your case manager at the local American Job Center (AJC) assigned you certain sections, write these down here too. We highly recommend that you do everything you’ve been asked to do (particularly if any potential monetary benefits depend on it), but don’t feel limited to do *only* that.

3. Prioritize

Look at the list you’ve compiled in Step 2. If you are at the beginning of your job search, having a strong, up-to-date resume is probably the most important thing right now. (It’s the bread and butter of job hunting!) But after that, what are the most important steps to study and put into practice? What can wait for further down the line? In the space provided below, rewrite your list in order of most important to less important.
