

CRITICAL WORKPLACE SKILLS WORKSHOP

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Master of Arts in Professional Communication

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**Approval Page**

We certify that we have read this project and that, in our opinion, it is satisfactory in scope and quality as a thesis for the degree of Master of Arts in Professional Communication

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### **Abstract**

This project came about as a vehicle to deliver research based information to young adults, particularly college freshman, by providing them with specific tools to become a competitive candidate in the hiring process. This was done by connecting theory used in organizational communication research to resumé creation and interview performance. The objective of this was accomplished by creating a workshop that helped early age college students stand out in the job market and be competitive job seekers instead of passive job applicants. Research conducted included gathering information from theories used in the organizational communication field that proved relevant to creating a resumé and performing well in an interview setting. Exploration regarding Systems Theory, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y were studied for the workshop. Components of research, in collaboration with key standard ideas for resume building and interview performance, were combined in the workshop and participants were given the opportunity to sketch an outline of their own resume and practice interview techniques based on the information learned in the workshop. The workshop was presented to students and evaluated to test the interest level and relevancy of the information learned in the workshop.

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## Introduction

By profession I am a job coach trainer and I currently am employed by one of the largest privately owned vocational rehabilitation centers in the Western United States. Two years ago I was the highest placing job coach in Southern Utah. Today, I am the top performing job coach in Southern Utah, Arizona, Nevada, and Southern California. My clients are individuals who are either unemployed or under-employed, meaning they either do not have a current job or the job in which they are working is one that is far below their potential. Over the duration of my four-year tenure in the field, I have coached hundreds of individuals who have found better and more meaningful employment. Seven out of 10 of my clients find a job where the work is more meaningful than what they had previously.

Often, however, there are individuals who apply for my services but do not qualify for what I offer based solely on criteria and policy from the organization at which I work. Many of these folks are graduating high school students who are in the process of joining the college ranks and becoming a freshman. I feel empathy for these novice job seekers because just a few months previous to them joining the college scene they had to raise their hands to use the rest room, where now, they are expected to compete in an adult world for jobs that are becoming increasingly scarce.

There are two dilemmas I feel our young generation faces: (1) our current national unemployment rate trend and (2) an awkwardness and struggle that might come from not knowing how to professionally communicate outside of a social media context. Susan Tardanico, CEO of Authentic Leadership Alliance, illustrates the later idea in an article for *Forbes Magazine*, in which she writes that electronic communication has overtaken face-to-face communication by a significant margin. She believes this has to do with the lack of comfort

Generation Y and Millennials have with traditional interpersonal communication (Tardanico, 2012). In order for a novice job seeker to be competitive in the job market and in getting a meaningful job, he or she has to know what the job game is and how to play it.

Part of this game is knowing what to do and what to say; it is also about knowing when to do it and how to say it. Sitting in front of a computer, applying for work all day is a good start, but believing this act alone will produce desired results is naïve and is best illustrated by believing that hiring managers would throw a pile of applications in the air and then hoping that yours would fall squarely on their desk. To be competitive in any economy, but especially in a down economy, takes much more than idle computer data entry; it takes proactive action to secure your resume a place on the hiring manager's desk.

In October of 2009 the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicated that our unemployment rates peaked at ten percent. For the next three years that percentage would hover around eight and nine percent (Bureau, 2014). As of February of this year our national unemployment rate dropped to 6.7 percent (Bureau, 2014). The graduated high school youth, now turning college freshman, is being placed in a difficult circumstance, e.g. jobs are tough to get if you don't know how to play the job search game.

Marla Dickerson (2012) from the *Los Angeles Times* published an article speaking to the challenge that college freshman and recently graduated high school student's face in today's economy. The article suggests 95 percent of young people want to go to college to better their career, but most recognize that they cannot afford college (Dickerson, 2012). Most college students remain financially dependent on their parents and only 15 percent are employed, albeit, part time (Dickerson, 2012).

A recent Rutgers University (2012) study comments on the debilitating circumstance that young adults face after graduating from high school. This national study found that 30 percent of young people are “unemployed and looking for work now,” (Horn, Stone, Szeltner, Zukin, 2012, pg., 20) and 70 percent of these individuals who are unemployed are “looking for full time work” (Horn, Stone, Szeltner, Zukin, 2012, pg., 28). When the youth were asked how long they’ve been actively seeking employment, 20 percent of them said “between seven months to a year” (Horn, Stone, Szeltner, Zukin, 2012, pg., 29). The same 20 percent expected to “start a new job in two months or less,” but have been unsuccessful in obtaining employment. Eighty percent of these youth have not as much received a job offer since their search began (Horn, Stone, Szeltner, Zukin, 2012, pg., 29).

Seeing that many youth have a desire to work and that some are failing in obtaining work for up to a year of searching caused me to wonder what resources are available in the field of Communication. Now, there are many resources available for novice job seekers who would want a job or who may want to get better employment, however, there is little exploration to see how Organizational Communication theories can assist a novice job seeker in becoming a more competitive candidate. Much of what is said in the Organizational Communication discipline deals with leadership styles for management, conflict resolution, decision making processes and relationships between superiors and their subordinates (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). These topics exist to benefit leaders of organizations and their managers. Organizational Communication seeks to provide tools for leaders in dealing with their day-to-day interaction with customers, employees and the public. It also seeks to show how the communication process is oft times impeded or how it can be used more effectively (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). When people are satisfied with the communication process in the organization then turnover decreases, loyalties



are formed, productivity increases, profit increases and work becomes an enjoyable place. (De Jong & Koning, 2006).

In short, Organizational Communication appeals to authoritative managers who need to control their organizations activity, all the way to a laissez-faire manager on the other side of the spectrum who merely assist in group dynamics and facilitates decision making processes for teams and departments (Littlejohn & Foss, 2009). Again, as stated earlier, a job seeker can find many resources in interviewing techniques, how to build a resume, or how to network more effectively. All these include great input for a job seeker. My goal is to provide a perspective from the Organizational Communication context to add to the resources already available and put that information together for the novice job seeker in a workshop format.

The purpose of this capstone project is to glean ideas and concepts from theories in the discipline of Organizational Communication that would help novice job seekers be better in their job search than their cohorts. Once theories have been identified I desire to create a workshop that will act as the platform or medium in which these concepts will be distributed. In short, I desire to help novice job seekers get the tools necessary to control their job search destiny, instead of idling away time hoping that a submitted online application will translate into secure employment. For the purposes of this study, I have defined a novice job seeker as a young adult who has recently graduated from high school and who is currently enrolled as a freshman in college.

Research in the realm of Organizational Communication is extensive and a thorough examination of all research is beyond the purpose of this project. In the review of the literature I have identified three critical topics that when seen through the correct filter can help a novice job seeker become more competitive in the job market. The three critical Organizational

Communication topics identified are: Systems Theory, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y. As a professional job coach trainer who has been in this career for a number of years, I feel that the three above mentioned Organizational Communication theories highlight necessary foundational work for a workshop to be effective.

By way of an outline on how the rest of this document is laid out I wish to communicate that on the subsequent page are the objectives I desire to accomplish. Following the objectives I have offered a review of the literature. In this section I do not attempt to draw any connections between Organizational Communication theories and the workshop. I've done this simply to build a theoretical foundation and then later in the document I will address how Organizational Communication Theory is connected to job seeking and what it ought to look like in the workshop.

### **Objectives**

The purpose of this research project is as follows and outlined below:

- Create a workshop that brings awareness and educates a novice job seeker. The workshop will teach participants applicable skills in building a resume, networking and interviewing as seen through an Organizational Communication context. Concepts learned in the workshop will help the participants stand out from their competition while helping them gain access to the "hidden job market." The "hidden job market" is available only to the proactive while the average job seeker takes a passive approach and simply will apply online and wait for a response.
- Integrate selected Organizational Communication Theory to act as the foundation to the principles taught in the workshop. Along with this objective it is desired that the foundational theoretical principles be understood in a way that has real life application.

The workshop must be clear so as to not make the participant guess what Organizational Communication theory looks like on a resume, or in an interview, etc. A booklet along with other visuals, i.e. power point presentation will be used to facilitate this objective.

- The workshop will be given to a group of individuals who are novice job seekers. For the purposes of this study I have defined a “novice job seeker” as a recently graduated high school student who is enrolled as a freshman in his or her first year of study at a university. I chose this definition because a typical college freshman was not too long ago in high school. College represents a transition from adolescence to young adulthood. These individuals, who were minors a few months ago, are now expected to compete in an adult world for jobs or suffer hunger, or being evicted from their residence, or dropping out of college, etc.
- Give at least one workshop to a group of participants before the end of the semester. Ideally, the number of participants needed for a fair evaluation would be between 20 and 30. I desire to get all 20 to 30 evaluations in one workshop, however, if multiple workshops need to be given to reach the desired sample then that is an option.
- Provide all participants with evaluations to be filled out in the form of a survey along with two essay questions. The evaluations will be conducted after the workshop and will be collected and put in a secure place for reasons of confidentiality as stated on the informed consent document. The data will be analyzed for points of strengths, and areas for improvement.

## **Literature Review**

### **Maslow's Needs Hierarchy in Organizational Context**

In an effort to understand human potential (Drinnien, Irwin & Simmons, 1987), psychologist Abraham Maslow created a general theory that proscribes a hierarchy of human needs. Maslow describes his theory as a hierarchy of prepotency (Maslow, 1943, Cooper & Pervin, 1998) and says that a lower need must be met or satisfied before the individual can focus on satisfying any higher level. The highest level an individual can achieve is self-actualization (Maslow, 1943). According to Maslow (1943) human behavior is motivated through unmet needs and lower level needs must be satisfied before higher level needs can be met. The needs that Maslow (1943) identified are, beginning with the lowest and most basic needs: physiological, safety, affiliation, esteem, and self-actualization.

Kathrine Miller (2006) suggests that Maslow's theory of Hierarchical Needs is critical to understand when discussing Organizational Communication Theory. For every “need level” that Maslow proscribes, Miller (2006) gives an example on how that need can be seen through an organizational context. For example, the physiological need can be satisfied when the employer provides a decent living wage for the employee. Once this need is satisfied then the employee is motivated to satisfy the safety need, which includes maintaining a safe work condition. After which, the employee can move on to the affiliation need by satisfying professional working relationships with co-workers. This in turn enables the employee to seek esteem by identifying rewarding work of an extrinsic or intrinsic nature. At the pinnacle of the hierarchy when an employee reaches self-actualization the company knows that the work allows the exercise of creativity; this is because there is no other thing to worry about. The mind is free to think of solutions to issues and complex problems in a creative manner (Miller, 2006).

Bowen and Sadri (2011) confirm this idea and further elaborates by suggesting the following: Physiological needs can be met by companies offering a satisfactory wages and benefits package, and also by offering perks at no cost or at a subsidy to the worker. Safety needs are satisfied by health benefits for the worker and his or her family members, retirement options, and in some cases counseling services accessed through a helpline. Affiliation is met by some companies by offering company-sponsored sports teams, clubs, and retreats. Esteem is seen in recognition and praise by employers to their workers which in turn builds confidence and strengthens motivation to become self-actualized. In this fifth need, self-actualization, the worker has all it needs from the employer and is in a position to become the best one is capable of being. In this tier the employee is looking to better themselves and those around them. One thing an employer might consider to help satisfy the employees needs to better themselves, at this level, is to offer tuition reimbursement to the employee so they can continue to learn become better in their chosen field (Bowen, Sadri, 2011).

What researchers (Miller, 2006; Bowden and Sadri, 2011) have done is to show us how the organization is responsible in taking an employee from the first need to the fifth. What this context misses is the responsibility the employee has to the employer in doing his or her best in satisfying these needs. A resolution to this is discussed later in the paper under the heading "work-related skills."

### **McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y**

Theory X and Theory Y describe dichotomous attitudes and assumptions that managers can have concerning employees but even more specifically the inherent behaviors and motivation of the employee (McGregor, 1957).

These two theories were developed by McGregor (1957) to gain a deeper understanding of how management views their employees and what their expectation is for them in the workplace. The two theoretical concepts are particularly important for business consultants and human resource managers who are charged with the responsibility of helping managers know how to better their leadership philosophy and motivate their employees (Cunningham, 2011).

McGregor (1957) suggests that Theory X managers believe employees are, by nature, indolent and lazy, and work as little as possible. These employees, by virtue of being born this way, prefer to be led and dislike responsibility (McGregor, 1957). A Theory X manager believes his or her employee is resistant to change and is not the smartest individual; obviously, McGregor would sarcastically say, the smarter of the bunch are those in management. One of the more vivid explanations described by McGregor (1957) on how Theory X managers see their workers is through this statement: “he [the employee] is self-centered, indifferent to organizational needs...gullible, not very bright, and the ready dupe of the charlatan and the demagogue” (p. 166).

Ultimately managers who assume a Theory X perspective motivate their employees into compliance using negative messages (Neuliep, 1987). These managers believe that people desire to be controlled and coerced because they like not having responsibility (Lorsch and Morse, 1970). A Theory Y manager, however, assumes the employee has different abilities and traits.

A Theory Y manager, according to McGregor (1957), views his or her employees as responsible. The employee, as seen by a Theory Y perspective, has a desire to work and work hard and intelligently; which comes as natural as play and rest (McGregor, 1957). In other words, employees can distinguish between work, play, and rest and have the self-control necessary to do each in their proper time and space. A Theory Y employee looks for

responsibility and fulfills his or her commitments. There exists, in this type of employee, the capacity to use his or her imagination and creativity in seeking solutions to issues and potential threats that arise in the workplace. Ultimately Theory Y assumes that employees work enthusiastically, with self-direction and self-control and are committed to the organizations goals (McGreggor, 1960).

McGregor (1957) suggested that managers should approach the boss to employee relationships as being Theory Y minded. However, he also pointed out that this style may not work in all situations (McGreggor, 1960). This is because there are work situations where employees are highly formalized and task oriented but also highly motivated to get the job done through no authoritative control. How can this be? Theory X would suggest that this can only be by way of coercion. Also, according to theory Y, the workers should be participating in decision making processes to be motivated.

New research has shed light on this type of organizational paradox. Morse and Lorsch (1970) present a theory that looks beyond Theory X and Y and suggest that different people have different needs and are motivated in different ways.

One thing we all have in common, however, is the need to be competent (Lorsch and Morse, 1970). Lorsch and Morse (1970) introduce a new theory, called Contingency Theory, that explains how individuals can still work in Theory X environments where there is not much responsibility and a lot of control, yet still be motivated to perform well and become competent at their task. This might be comforting to managers who recognize that their work environment is more task oriented and formalized, like factory or warehouse work, but who still desire motivated.

Many managers believe Theory Y is a more humane way of seeing their employees, especially when evaluating their performance. There was a lot of resistance from management in doing conventional performance appraisals because the culture of the organization was to view the employee and incompetent and lazy. Any resistance seemed to reflect an unwillingness to treat human beings like physical objects. The needs of the organization are obviously important to management, but when they come into conflict with their convictions about the worth and the dignity of the human being, one or the other must give (Bennis and McGregor, 1972).

Bennis and McGregor (1972) saw a new approach to performance appraisals through the Theory Y perspective which takes the process from appraisal to analysis. This is a more positive approach. No longer is the subordinate evaluated through the boss's perspective but rather is given the responsibility to creatively formulate personal goals in which he or she must in time be accountable to their boss. Ultimately this means that the employee knows best over the boss on whether or not he or she qualifies for promotion or is put on a path to termination (Bennis and McGregor, 1972). This also means that a manager takes on more of a facilitating role in the team and becomes less of a micro-manager.

One major concern in the adaptation of Theory Y management systems was job security for managers. In essence if the decision making power was taken away from their control and given to the worker then was their job secure or redundant? Another concern is the time it took to form participative groups amongst the ranks and then allow these groups to talk about the issues, make a decision and come to a consensus on the solution (Klein, 1984). With employees who are self-directed and are seen as great problem solvers this concern is certainly validated. And with this in mind a theory about systems evolved to mitigate some of these concerns.



**Systems Approach.**

Like Douglas McGregor who saw management and their employees as more than just being Theory X minded; systems theory changed the way hierarchy was seen in the organization (Miller, 2006). Instead of a top-down hierarchy in the organization, the systems approach changes the paradigm by viewing hierarchy as varying departments that are connected to each other. These departments depended on each other for organizational success (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1972). So much so that a department will be rendered ineffective if other departments fail to function at the best of its ability.

Organizational theorist Katz and Kahn (1978) were influential in first suggesting that organizations should be seen through the metaphor of a biological system, like our bodies. Bertalanffy (1950) further explores this concept and makes the connection between the biological and the organization by adding that, “every organic form is the expression of a flux of processes. It persists only in a continuous change of its components. Every organic system appears stationary...but if we go a step deeper, we find that this maintenance involves continuous change” (p. 27). Businesses are like organisms and the organizations success is obtained as a result of varying departments interacting with each other. That is to say when one department experiences movement or changes then other departments react to it, assist in its involvement or are changed as a result.

There are components, processes, and properties that define the systems metaphor (Miller, 2006) and for the purposes of this section, I will explore two components and one property. The two components are: hierarchical ordering and interdependence of the system. The one property is that of equifinality (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1972). The following few paragraphs explore in depth these three items:

Traditionally in the systems approach, (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1972) the organization is seen as if it were a “biological organism” (pg., 450). The human body, for example, is made up of many different systems, for example, the cardiovascular, digestive and respiratory systems to name a few. Each of these systems has a set of sub systems that assist in moving things along. In the digestive system, for example, the sub systems would be organs like the esophagus, stomach, large and small intestines and so forth. Each of these organs within the digestive system has a specific function. If one sub system gets injured then the system becomes dysfunctional in some manner or the other and in turn the whole organism suffers (Miller, 2006). Using biology as a metaphor to help us understand organizations and how they work is an example of hierarchal ordering in Systems Theory (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1972).

The paradigm in the workplace from a top-down approach changes from management controlling the information to systems or departments sharing information. Or at least it creates an environment where shared information is seen as vital for organizational success. Bartlett and Ghoshal (1995) saw that an organization's real competitive power came from understanding how to diffuse and disperse information throughout the company. They saw information as being vital and volatile and to have true value it must be linked to other information in other departments of the organization. Thus, management's true challenge is to create an environment where workers can exploit the information (Bartlett and Ghoshal, 1995). The concept of information sharing is an example equifinality. In biology equifinality means that sub systems and systems alike are open to their environment and that a particular goal can be reached by various means. They allow information to enter and exit freely. Equifinality says that there is no one way to reach a goal. Katz and Kahn (1978) indicate that there are multiple and varying ways that a system can reach its final state; although the initial condition may be different, the destination is the same. Porter

(1975) clarifies this concept suggesting that a system consists of various inputs that go into a process or operation of some kind and result in a measurable output. The measurement is used to adjust the inputs or the process in order to produce desired results (Porter, 1975).

Another important concept taken from the systems metaphor is that of interdependence. An interdependent characteristic in the system is when the “functioning of one component of a system relies on other components of the system” (Miller, 2006, pg., 62). Thinking again of the human body, two systems are interdependent when they rely on each other to function which supports the survival of the whole organism. For example, the digestive system is interdependent on other systems, such as the cardiovascular system, to transfer needed nutrients to the rest of the body. The reality is, that the body is a dependent organism; if one system shuts down then other systems eventually break down as well.

In an organization there are many systems, Cheng and Lin (2007) call these systems flows, i.e. fund flows, personnel flows, information flows. These flows interact with their environment and with each other and a relationship is formed with specific laws that govern its interaction (Cheng and Lin, 2007). Like an organism company systems are called departments and sub systems are called teams or groups or areas, etc. According to Systems theory departments are most successful when they understand that they are dependent on each other for information, and also, when they are open to information the company can be more competitive. Sometimes a sub system (team, group or individual) within the organism (company) stops working like it should, when this happens the whole system (department), other systems (other departments) and eventually the whole organism (company) suffers.

Being able to see a company as a system helps management define a culture where information can flow freely between individuals and departments. Also, it avoids any tendency

to for management to be the holders of all wisdom but rather allows for more individuals to participate in decision making processes throughout the organization. In short this theory is another tool for Theory Y managers to help motivate employees

### **Linking Theory to the Critical Workplace Skills Workshop**

This section attempts to bridge the gap between theory used Organizational Communication and what it will look like in the workshop. The three research topics (Systems Theory, Maslow's Hierarchy and Theory X and Y) serve as the foundation for helping novice job seekers network, write a resume and interview more effectively.

A while ago I read a book by Robert Kiyosaki called *Cashflow Quadrant*. In the book Kiyosaki (2000) talks about a seminar he attended about goal setting. He said the instructor put three words on the chalk board: be, do, have; and indicated that these three words are what it takes to accomplish a goal. Most people only focus on the last two words, “do” and “have” and thus fail to reach the goal. He reasoned that to “have” represents the end result or the goal we desire to “have”. The “do” is the action we take to accomplish what we eventually want to “have.” The “be” word, though, represents what we must become; because being something guides our thoughts, beliefs and values and ultimately it dictates our actions, which in turn facilitates what we end up doing and having. Kiyosaki says that most people fail in their goals because they ignore what they must “be” and focus solely on what they must “do” to get what they want to “have.”

An example of “do” and “have” focused people are individuals who want to lose weight but who do not spend time evaluating their belief system about how they view food or a healthy lifestyle, but rather spend time and money on diet schemes to help them accomplish what they want to have. This tactic may last for a time but when the weight is lost or starvation sets in then

the old habits take over. Kiyosaki suggests then, that a person should invest time in “becoming” the person you want to be first and then focus on “doing” and “having” which will result in a much longer outcome of success.

As part of the workshop I desire to invest time in what a novice job seeker should be; how he or she should think, before they act and respond in the job search setting. The first part of the workshop is dedicated to this idea and does little in telling the client what he or she must do. Instead of proscribing things for novice job seekers to do, I desire first to impress on the mind of a job seeker what he or she must think in order to better be prepared to interact with hiring managers. As the relationship with the hiring manager evolves, the job seeker must be flexible to not stifle the professional relationship. If I were to simply provide the tactics to getting a job without explaining the thought process that makes up the reason behind the tactics then the job seeker is left with no autonomous decision making skills to guide him or her in the moment.

As a job coach I know that I cannot be physically present when my clients are interviewing or networking, but I can teach guiding principles that when understood can help clients defend themselves in the job search process.

The second part of the workshop is dedicated to specific techniques that can be used in the job search process. After I teach them what they must “be” I then talk about what they can “do”. The three research topics connected with job search techniques will prove useful in focusing the mind and giving direction in the hiring process.

On the following page, I offer what I call the “three imperatives” that must be understood and when linked together with the three theory topics as discussed earlier provide the basis for the workshop.

### **The Three Imperatives**

When a novice job seeker desires to know if a job is available how would that individual go about finding a job opening? Research indicates that more than half of young adults seek out available job openings from either the newspaper, classifieds or online job boards (Horn, Stone, Szeltner, Zukin, 2012). Employment resource centers indicate that 80 percent of available jobs are not posted in the classifieds or online job boards, but rather, are found in what is called the hidden job market (Effective Networking, 2012).

The hidden job market is so named because the average job seeker is content on searching for jobs online instead of going out and finding what jobs are *going* to be available in the *future*. Online job searching is reactive. And if it's the only strategy to finding a job then that individual may not get the edge he or she needed. A more proactive approach is to identify positions that are nearing the point to open and begin building the relationship with the hiring manager on the front side of the job posting. Proactively seeking the job puts the seeker in a position to be considered even before the position opens.

So, how does one tap into the “hidden job market”? By networking or building a relationship with the people who have the power to hire. Companies are always looking for employees. Yates (2001) explains that even a company with no growth can still be expected to experience a 14 percent turnover in the course of a year. The trick is to make yourself stand out from the competitors. The average job seeker will spend most of his or her time online submitting job applications. A sophisticated job seeker will leave the computer and begin contacting business and building relationships (Job Search planning, 2012, par. 1). This is done by having job seekers choose a company they desire to work for and then begin networking; or building that professional relationship with a decision maker. The networking relationship will

give the job seeker a foot in the door long before the company decides to hire or even post the job in an online job bank.

There are two zones in which the novice job seeker needs to stand out. Success in the first zone will gain them access into the second zone and success in the second will secure the job seeker the job. To survive in each zone and ultimately get the job, the job seeker will need to understand and apply three guiding imperatives, which are: Transferable skills, work related skills and self-management skills.

Application of these three imperatives act as principles that guide all job seekers interactions and help build a professional relationship with those who have the power to hire. In addition to helping build a network, careful execution of the imperatives will be seen in the resume, in the cover letter and will help prepare the novice job seeker for the interview. Let's examine each of these imperatives one by one.

### **Transferable Skills**

A skill that is transferable is one that can be identified in one type of work and used in another. Identifying these skills helps the job seeker translate volunteer work, school activities or current job into something that is useful for the job they are trying to get.

For example, a student who has never had a formal job but is now wanting a job as a cashier may think, erroneously, that there is no chance of being considered because the lack of experience. However, after considering some transferable skills like, class attendance, getting along with others, following directions, the student may have some hope. This student, for example, may comment on his or her dependability by saying, "attendance is important to me, for example, I was awarded a certificate at school for perfect attendance. I have a commitment to always being on time"

System Theory provides novice job seekers a way to understand their potential role within the larger scale of the company from whom they are seeking employment. An axiom in the business world that describes the difference between a manager and the subordinate is that subordinates often-times concern themselves more deeply with the timeline of when their next paycheck is arriving in their bank account; their vision only goes as far as the next paycheck. Whereas, a manager isn't so much concerned about living from pay check to pay check and has a vision for the company that extends months to even years in the future (Sasser, 2012).

This idea highlights a common mistake observed from novice job seekers desiring an entry level position. The mistake is not seeing what is important to management. The decision maker, in the hiring process, wants to hire an individual that will help the company reach both its short and long term goals; this is not research, it's common sense. If the job seeker cannot see how his or her role in the company has a purpose for meeting these goals then the job seeker is not making him or herself a competitive candidate and has potentially lost the job already.

The systems metaphor can provide a framework for the job seeker to discover how the particular job he or she is applying for is essential to the company. The company is willing to pay money out of its own budget; money that could go to other people, positions or departments, in whatever way it sees fit but it chooses however to allocate money to the open position. Why? What is it about that position that is so important for the company? A person who is only concerned about being in the company to receive a pay check may approach an interview too narrow minded.

What information can the systems metaphor, when applied to the hiring process prove useful in giving direction on building a resume or help in the interview; how can it expand vision



that helps the decision maker understand that the job seeker's goals are aligned with management goals? Let's explore some concepts.

Understanding the flow and process of an organization and how a particular job, if done incorrectly, can cause a breakdown in other departments, is fundamental to understand in the hiring process. How, one might ask? When the novice job seeker can see potential threats or breakdowns in the organization then articulating specific skills and talents becomes easier. The purpose of knowing those threats is to allow the novice job seeker to communicate in the interview and on a resume specific skills, education and experience that are solutions to these potential threats or issues. Knowing what skills fill the gap between what you can do and what the employer needs makes the novice job seeker seem proactive and solution oriented rather than reactionary to problems and emergency oriented. It communicates to a hiring manager that a novice job seeker thinks and has vision that go beyond the pay check to pay check mentality. Plus, it help the novice job seeker transfer previous work-related experience to what the employer needs.

For a novice job seeker this is particularly important because in the system there are components that are initiated in complex ways which provide a variety of solutions. Being aware of threats and potential breakdowns in the organization is just the beginning; and also, being able to communicate how your skills, education and experience are solutions to these problems may not be good enough. However, if the novice job seeker knows that a system runs on a property of equifinality then that job seeker will have prepared a "variety of paths" that are solutions in helping the "system ...reach the same final state" (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1972, pg 450).

By understanding the Systems Theory novice job seekers can align better with management's goals. Systems theory allows the job seeker to see potential threats and challenges that may exist in the organization. It should better help the novice job seeker communicate in an effective way that they understand the industry they are trying to enter.

It will help novice job seekers visualize the bigger picture and how the role and position relates to and effects other departments and people. Thus, taking them out of the realm of the "pay check to paycheck" mentality and to a level where it becomes possible to see the company as their management counterparts see the company. When the novice job seeker can anticipate beforehand what management is concerned about, then in the job search process, some of those discussions can take place along with how the novice job seeker's skill set can address management's concerns.

In short, the idea of seeing businesses as systems is to focus the job seekers mind on what the business would be if a particular position did not exist. What problems in the organization would exist if you were not a part of it? What other departments would be in trouble, and what would those troubles look like if your role in the organization did not exist? What have you done in the organization that makes other departments run smoother and more efficiently?

As a job seeker, by asking yourself these questions you accomplish a few things. One of the benefits is that you begin to see past contributions you have made. This makes identifying accomplishments easier. Yates (2001) comments on this idea when she said:

Believe it or not, very few people have a clear fix on what they do for a living. Oh, I know; you ask a typist what he or she does, and you get, "Type stupid." You ask an accountant, and you hear, "Fiddle with numbers, what do you think?" And that is the problem. Most people don't look at their work beyond these simplistic terms. They never

examine the implications of their jobs in relation to the overall success of the department and the company (p, 37).

When considering transferable skills, look to the problems you solve in the daily grind. What problems would occur if you were not there? What issues for your supervisor and his manager and other managers, and the person sitting next to you in the adjacent cubical, would arise if you did not exist in the organization? Likening departments to systems can help you better identify the problems that you solve and help you see what you do for the organization in reaching organizational goals and success.

This exercise is useful when trying to identify accomplishments from previous or current employment, and it will help you see what actions you took to get specified results; information that is crucial to put in a resume or talk about in an interview.

Exploring the systems approach can give you a competitive edge in the interview by providing insight into what some of the challenges management might face and providing the platform to discuss how those challenges can be solved. The outcome of this exercise is to see your work in terms of your larger contribution and identify accomplishments from previous experience that can transfer to other employment as solutions to challenges the new employer may be facing. Systems theory helps you see what you've done in the past and connect those skills to solutions that will help a new employer solve their problems.

Systems theory gives the job seeker an edge from the competition in being able to see the position in terms of how "the boss" sees the organization. They can start to see problems and worries associated with their job as a manager of a department would see them and how each section of the organization could relate to each other (Yates, 2001). Knowing these problems are important to identify, because then they can be addressed in a resume and in the interview. Hiring

managers look for people who can solve their problems. Job seekers should be able to see the organizations vulnerabilities and develop a plan to manage them (Kaufman, 2012).

The harsh reality is that “employers will not use their time to figure out where a person might fit into their organization” (Ryan, 2003, p. 25). Proper application of Systems theory, as used in the job search context, can make articulating the “fit” more clear to an employer. The “focus is always on filling the employer’s needs and selling the skills to do just that” (pg., 61).

When a job seeker looks at their potential employer through the lens of a system then it shows “that the time has been made to research our institutions [needs]...People must take the time to spell out the[ir] specific accomplishments (Ryan, 2003, p.25).

### **Work-Related Skills**

A work-related skill is one that communicates to the employer that you, as a job seeker, have within yourself a certain level of economic and emotional stability. These skills manifest themselves in many ways and the best way to flush these out is to consider Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs in an organizational context. Maslow talks about five needs wherein, the highest obtainable need is that of self-actualization. Before any higher need can be achieved, a lower need has to be met by a comfortable level of satisfaction, thus, the hierarchical nature of the needs (Miller, 2006).

The first level and most basic is the physiological need. The second need is that of safety, the third need is affiliation; fourth, esteem; and fifth, as mentioned earlier, self-actualization. The trick for a job seeker is to communicate via resume and interview that no unresolved issues exist in the lower three needs in the hierarchy. This state of being is important because it can show stability, and hopefully, will demonstrate to the employer that you, the job seeker, can be focused on company issues instead of personal issues.

If an employer wants to motivate a worker then the employer will take the initiative to satisfy lower level needs until the worker is self-actualized (Miller, 2006). However, if a job seeker wants to stand out from the competition he or she will identify what problems or challenges the company faces and come prepared with how their skill set will solve these problems. In essence, the job seeker is taking initiative before being hired to prove that lower needs have already been met, thus, communicating to the employer that no extra resources need to be wasted in motivation (Hayhoe, 2004). What a powerful thing to say to a new employer, “You don’t have to motivate me, I come already motivated.” Wherein, the rest of the applicants might come saying, “What are you, future employer, going to do to motivate me, or to bring me to a level of self-actualization?” Hayhoe (2004) suggests that good job seekers do not put the onus of responsibility to motivate on the employer. It is the job seekers responsibility to explain that they come already motivated.

Individuals, who in their personal lives, are suffering in “lower level needs” communicate that it will take a lot from the company to bring them up to a point where their creativity and problem solving capability can be utilized to the companies benefit. This is a huge investment and drains money from the company. From the company’s perspective, people who are not stable economically exhibit poor work behaviors, such as poor attendance, getting along with their co-workers and staying on task throughout the work day (Marr & Roessler, 1986). This is obvious to see because if individuals are worried about where their next meal is going to take place or where they are going to sleep after work then nothing else will occupy their mind but satisfying that need; even at the expense of not focusing on the work.

Another way to view someone still coming up short in the hierarchy is an example of individuals, who in their personal lives, have not satisfied their affiliation need. When this is the

case, then inappropriate social behaviors form in the workplace. Not getting along with co-workers in appropriate ways can result in being fired and certainly will prohibit the employee from getting promoted (Marr & Roessler, 1986). Employers do not want to hire drama makers. They seek out problem solvers (Yate, 2001).

The good news is that individuals who have not yet met lower level needs in Maslow's hierarchy can be coached in a way to help them become competitive candidates in the job market by how and what is communicated in the hiring process. Specific techniques are discussed in the Critical Workplace Skills Workshop.

Remember any interaction that you, the job seeker, have with the organization on a face-to-face basis should demonstrate to the hiring manager that your creativity can be used. Help them understand that they do not need to invest time and money to bring you up to the fifth need level; show them that you are already there. This is not done by saying, "I only applied for this job because I heard it paid well," or, "I need this job for the money." These are comments from a job seeker who has not yet satisfied the first basic need in his or her personal life. Managers assume that if an employee is worried about their wages and any perceived inequality then an inordinate amount of time will be wasted on the job thinking about the unfair salary (Benson and Dundis, 2003). What can be done, however, is to follow these simple level five rules: dress for success, bring in a well written resume (get someone else to proof-read if necessary), treat every person you meet in the organization as if they were the CEO, who knows, they just might be, look the interviewer in the eye, shake their hand, wait for them to sit before you sit or for them to motion to you to sit, call them by name and refer to a common acquaintance or interest. Managers know that when individuals satisfy higher needs then they produce greater results and have higher performance (Hall and Leidecker, 1974).

All of this leads up in helping the interviewer understand that you are functioning at the highest hierarchical level. At this level the interviewer knows that your creativity can be tapped into. This is possible because you aren't worried about anything else. At the least, you can keep personal drama at home and focus on work when you are at work. These things seem simple but can be the deciding factor when compared to someone else who is equally qualified.

Employers are progressively looking for workers who are mature and socially well-adjusted. Robles (2012) argues that soft skills are more important than technical skills and contribute to long range success 85% of the time. Having softer skills and knowing how to communicate these to an employer is a way of saying that lower level needs of physiology, safety, esteem and affiliation have been satisfied. According to Maslow's (1943) principle of prepotency, which says that a higher need cannot be met until a lower one is satisfied justifies how basic soft skills like getting along with others (affiliation) already puts an individual higher on the need hierarchy. Yes, employers want workers who get along with each other, but ultimately employers want individuals who are problem solvers and who are creative in reaching these solutions (Yates, 2001). Robles (2012) argues that the top three soft skills that executives want in their workers are: integrity, communication and courtesy.

Self-actualization or as Miller (2006) defines it, worker creativity, can be communicated by a job seeker to the hiring manager, through stating examples when integrity, communication and courtesy were demonstrated in their work life. Sometimes it takes a creative mind to arbitrate a solution while at the same time staying true to these soft skills.

Another way to communicate work-related skills is to address skills that are related to the work for which you are applying. These can be found in the job description. If the job requires you to type 60 words per minute then you had better communicate, in either the interview or at

least on the resume, that you can accomplish the work and type 60 words per minute. Ryan (2003) writes that job seekers “should customize their resumé to point out the specific skills and experience requested in [a] job advertisement” (pg. 26). Matching your skills to the qualifications of the job can be done by using the Matching sheet I have provided in Step 3 of the “Building a Resume” section found in the booklet.

### **Self-Management Skills**

A skill that highlights your ability to self-manage behaviors and attitudes are those that demonstrate your ability to act professionally in the workplace. Organizational Communication behaviorist Douglas McGregor divided management attitudes towards their subordinates into two camps; these camps reflect attitudes on two different ends of the spectrum. The first camp, McGregor calls, Theory X and the second he calls Theory Y (McGregor, 1957).

Theory X says that managers believe their employees desire to be forced and controlled into being motivated. They simply do not like to take on responsibility (Lorsch and Morse, 1970). Theory Y managers believe that their employees are competent individuals and desire to solve business problems (Lorsch and Morse, 1970).

Even though management has made great strides in the direction of treating employees as humans, as Theory Y would suggest, and not as incompetents as Theory X suggests, the employee has not evolved so valiantly. The employee, on the other hand, at times, behaves in ways that can make management question the Theory Y philosophy and the employee’s commitment to the organization. There *are* employees who simply act lazy and who are self-centered and indifferent to organizational goals. This is a reality. Even though our society has transitioned around management personnel who embrace a Theory Y ideal; we have yet to exterminate employees who behave like Theory X individuals.



Therefore, if novice job seekers are wise, then in an interview, or in any other interaction they may have with a hiring manager they would do well to communicate that they are a Theory Y employee; one who is dependable, reliable, and able to stay on task whether or not a supervisor is present, etc.

The problem today, is not with the Theory Y culture, but that many employees sometimes work like a Theory X employee, when the expectation is that we all work like a Theory Y employee. Oft-times our attendance is poor, or we don't know how to accept supervision, or resolve interpersonal conflicts. We struggle responding non-defensively to criticism. In short our behavior at times proves to our employer that we are incompetent or unmotivated or too lazy to work or need to be micromanaged. Which, by the way, all of these are exhausting to a supervisor and if noticed in an interview will cause the job seeker to be avoided by the hiring manager. So the idea is to put the interviewer at rest by letting them know you, as a seeker of a job, are a Theory Y employee, who can be depended on and who can solve the employer's problems. Remember employers hire problem solvers not problem makers.

After explaining the two types of managers I always ask my clients what kind of manager they want to work for? Most all want one who is supportive, not controlling and who can create an environment where they can be creative in solution making. I then ask what kind of employee the boss may want? One that is lazy and who only works when the boss is present and watching? Which kind of worker does the employer deserve?

A job seeker must communicate to the hiring manager via resume or interview that he or she is a Theory Y worker. Although Theory Y managers assume that their employees are capable of self-management, they are sometimes forced by the employee to lead in a more Theory X managerial style (Sager, 2008). This can be destructive for the organization because as Sager

(2008) argues, managers whose communicative style is more Theory X oriented alienate their employees costing the company money on turnover and loss of production.

I believe there are tremendous nuggets that can be gleaned, and, if understood could help novice job seekers better prepare themselves for any interaction they might have with a potential employer. While looking at these two theories (Theory X and Theory Y) job seekers could ask themselves the following: What kind of employee would be a competitive candidate, a Theory X employee or a Theory Y employee? At the end of the interview how do I want my potential employer to see me? As a potential Theory X employee or as a potential Theory Y employee? How do I communicate to my potential employer that I am and always have been a Theory Y employee? And that by hiring me I will not be a liability to the company by slipping into Theory X habits and tendencies? Specific communication techniques are discussed in the Critical Workplace Skills Workshop.

### **Full Transcript of CWSW**

(The following section is the full transcript of the Critical Workplace Skills Workshop. I carried on my person a tape recorder and later transcribed what you will read below. Not included in the recording is the first five minutes where I presented the individuals in the workshop with the informed consent and had them fill it out. Each participant read silently the possible risks and benefits of the workshop and were given a chance to ask questions. The participants were also given the opportunity to leave if they desired. The informed consent paper work was kept in a secure place separate from the data collected from the participants.)

My name is Steven Holyoak and I am a job coach trainer. I work for one of the largest privately owned vocational rehabilitation centers in the west. In 2012, I was the highest placing job coach in southern Utah. Today I am the top performing job coach in southern Utah, Arizona,

Nevada and southern California. I enjoy talking to individuals and working with them on a one-on-one basis and helping them develop a resume and also helping them develop interview skills. My placement rate is 70 percent, or in other words, seven out of ten of my clients find better and more meaningful work.

By the raise of hands how many of you in this class have a job? How many of you who do not have a job want one? Those of you who are employed do you have the job you want to keep until you retire?

*(Some hands went up in response to the first question; most hands went up in response to the second question; and one individual communicated by the raise of a hand that the job he was in was the job he desired to have until retirement.)*

The purpose of this workshop is to bring awareness to those who have a desire to get a job or improve upon their current job status. What skills are necessary to stand out as a job seeker against the hundreds of other applicants? In a down economy there are many opportunities to succeed as a job applicant if you know the skills to employ. A down economy means that more and more people are vying for the same job, and for those who know how to play the game there is a greater advantage. The reason is because the majority of the applicants do not know how to stand out and in the end they all approach the job market the same. Which means they look the same to a hiring manager.

What is the most common method used by others to find an available job?

*(Answers included: online, classifieds, newspapers, job boards, friends, other people, managers, networking).*

Interestingly, the most common method is through an online job posting or in the classifieds. About two weeks ago I went online to a common job search engine and in the search field I

typed Cedar City, Utah; hit enter, and 106 jobs came up; available two weeks ago here in Cedar. At first glance this may seem great, however, the problem with this is that it only represents about 20 percent of the available jobs in Cedar. The other 80 percent of available jobs are found in what is called the “hidden job market.” The 80 percent, in the “hidden job market” represents, here in Cedar, 424 jobs that are available. To put it in more basic terms, if Cedar had ten available jobs how many would be posted online or in the classifieds? (*The answer was unanimously vocalized: 2.*) That is correct. Eight, then, would be found in the “hidden job market.”

The trick, is gaining access to the “hidden job market.” Getting into the pool of 80 percent that others may not know about. This is done by simply choosing 10 to 15 organizations or companies in which you would like to work. Once the business has been chosen by you, then you can begin networking. Networking means building a relationship with people who have the power to hire you.

Now, many people balk at this method for many different reasons, one common reason is that they feel the company may not be hiring and so there is no opportunity. This is an erroneous thought for two reasons: the first, is that even a company who is not even expecting any growth in the next year will still experience about 14 percent turnover (Yate, 2001). Second, as a job seeker you want to do things different from the hundreds of other applicants; you want to stand out. Doing this requires networking or building a relationship with the person who has the power to hire you. Having that foundational relationship will pay off in the long run and will put yourself in a position to be considered for the job long before the posting goes public online.

The average job seeker spends little to no time networking and most to all of their time sitting in front of a computer screen applying online (Berndt, 2010, para 1). A job seeker who

wants to stand out, and be a competitive candidate in the job market will spend most of their time networking, which is, building relationships with the decision makers. They also spend some small amount of time online looking for available jobs and submitting applications.

So how is this done? What does it look like? What is the best way to build a professional relationship with the people who have the power to hire you? In your booklet I have identified two zones in which the stand out job seeker must understand in moving forward. The first zone addresses networking and the second zone addresses the interview.

In order to stand out in Zone One you must have a stand out Resume and a Power Paragraph. These two items are tools to be used. They are weapons to put in your quiver. A good bow hunter never goes to the woods without any arrows. And the arrows he does have are sharp. The same is true for a job “hunter” who desires to stand out. The tools that are used by the job hunter and that need to be sharp are the Resume and the Power Paragraph.

The tools for Zone Two are a Power Paragraph and Action Statements that are geared around and connected to the most commonly asked interview questions. Having these tools in your job “quiver” will take away any fear and anxiety you may have going into the interview. And, if these tools are sharp then they are effective in making you stand out from all the other candidates being interviewed.

There are three skills that one really needs to understand and which are foundational to integrate into the tools used in the first and second zones. These skills when applied correctly will sharpen the Resume, Power Paragraph and Action Statements. The three imperatives skills are: transferable skills, work-related skills, and self-management skills. We are briefly going to cover these three skills then we will see how they can be integrated in the first and second zones.

The first is transferable skills. This one is simple. It is a skill that you have gained in your current or previous work that can transfer to another job. The best way to flesh out a transferable skill is to think of companies like a system. The body for example has many systems. Can somebody please name one of these systems? (*answers included: cardiovascular, digestive, respiratory, etc.*) Wonderful! The good thing about seeing a business like a system is that systems have subsystems. For example a subsystem of the cardiovascular system would be what? (*answers included: veins, heart.*) Perfect! Now, what are some subsystems of the digestive system (*answers included: large and small intestines, stomach, esophagus.*) Remember, the first attribute of a system is that all systems have subsystems.

The second attribute of systems is that systems and subsystems are interdependent. Or in other words, they depend on each other to be successful. For example, how does the digestive system depend on the cardiovascular system? (*answers included: the digestive system draws out the nutrients and the cardiovascular systems is the vehicle in which the nutrients are delivered to the body.*) Very good, that is a great example! The thing to remember about interdependency is that if one system decides to shut down and not do its job then other systems suffer and the body is hurt. Businesses are no different; they are systems too. Organizations are made up of departments, teams, groups, all the way down to the individual. Departments, teams, and groups and even the individuals are dependent on other departments, teams groups and individuals to do their job correctly, and if someone or some department decides not to work then others suffer.

When beginning to write a Resume or Power Paragraph you want to identify the individuals, groups, teams and departments who are dependent on you. Then ask yourself questions like: what problems would occur if I was not there? What issues or challenges would

arise if I did not work here? As a result of me being here, have things become more efficient in mine or other areas? What are they? How did I do it? Why was this significant to the business?

Thinking in these terms, of the business as a system, you can begin to see what challenges your boss faces. Seeing the organization like your boss sees the organization is an invaluable perspective. As one professional career coach put it knowing how the boss sees the organization will help you identify “problems and worries associated with their job as a manager of a department and how each section of the organization could relate to each other” (Yate, 2001, p. 35). In short you want to see how and what your contributions have been to the business.

Believe it or not, very few people have a clear fix on what they do for a living.

Oh, I know; you ask a typist what he or she does, and you get, “Type stupid.”

You ask an accountant, and you hear, “Fiddle with numbers, what do you think?”

And that is the problem. Most people don't look at their work beyond these simplistic terms. They never examine the implications of their job in relation to the overall success of the department and the company (Yates, 2001, p. 35).

After you have a good handle and have identified what your contributions have been then you are in a position to match those contributions to your future employment. As you look forward to the new job you are seeking you will be better equipped to see what challenges that organization might face. Knowing these challenges will help you know what you need to include in your Resume and Power Paragraph. You will be able to see the current problems your future boss is dealing with and why they have opened the position you are seeking. Your Resume, Power Paragraph and Action Statements will be answers or solutions that address these problems and issues. When you successfully make the connection on your resume what you've

done in your previous work and how that transfers over to your new employer as solutions to their problems then you have a sharp arrow that will make you stand out above your competition.

The second skill of the three imperatives is the Work-related Skill. This skill is fleshed out by considering Maslow's Hierarchy of needs. Maslow, a humanistic psychologist, identified five needs that every individual experiences throughout their lives; the highest need is self-actualization. These needs are hierarchical, meaning that before a person enters a higher level need he or she must satisfy the lower level need in the hierarchy. The first need, according to Maslow, is physiological. This is the most basic human need; the need for food, shelter, air, clothing, etc. We cannot move up to the second or third level and then to affiliation in the hierarchy until we satisfy this first need. This is also true of not being able to move up to the fifth need of being self-actualized without first satisfying the lower needs of esteem, affiliation and so forth. The idea behind this is that if a person is worried about not having food to eat then making friends to hang out with as outlined in the third level need is not practical.

In the organizational context we want to communicate to the employer that we are functioning at level five and all other need levels are satisfied. An employee who is functioning at level five is one whose creativity can be tapped into by the organization. These are individuals whom the organization can count on in not bringing personal drama into the workplace. Instead of wasting personal and company energy worrying about your next pay check, the company will demand that you use that time to solve their problems. Instead of finding ways to satisfy the affiliation need by inappropriately socializing with coworkers in the workplace, being off task, or gossiping, the management team wants you to be creative and build their business. Somehow you must communicate in a Resumé, Power Paragraph or in Action Statements that you are functioning at a level five in the need hierarchy.



Job seekers who are suffering in the lower need levels communicate instability in various ways as they interact with the people who have the power to hire. The good news is that if you are struggling in the lower levels you can prove to the decision makers otherwise. Some examples of ways that an individual may communicate they are functioning in the lower levels are seen in the booklet. Can I get a volunteer to read the “lower level communication” section? Great! Now would you please read the section that explains what we can do to demonstrate we are functioning at a level five under the section “higher level communication?” Folks who are not at the level five need say things in the interview like, “I only applied because I saw it paid well.” Or they turn in an application in poor non-professional dress. Individuals who communicate at the higher level show how their creativity can be utilized and their skills are matched to the job.

What you don't want is for your future employer to feel that during work hours your mind, focus and conversation will not be on work. What you do want is for the future employer to feel that you are someone whose creative energy can be utilized to solve problems.

Communicating a Work-related skill will also take the guess work out for the hiring manager on how you can contribute to the job they need you to do. For example, if they need someone who can type 60 words per minute then you had better communicate to them that you can type 60 words per minute. I've seen many resumes where an applicant was applying for a particular job, say a cashier, and their resume only shows how good of a Certified Nurse Assistant they were. After looking at the resume my first comments are something like this, “Wow, you would make a great C.N.A., or even a supervisor of C.NA.'s in a hospital. But how does this help me to know how good of a cashier you will be?” Well the answer is it does nothing but tell me they are applying for the wrong job. Don't make the hiring manager guess

how your skill set fits into their organization, ultimately you want to help them understand how you can solve their problems.

Ultimately, whether or not you are in actuality struggling in any lower level need on the hierarchy is unimportant. What you need to be able to do is to show the employer, by how and what you communicate, that you are functioning at the highest level, level five; the creative level. Utilizing this skill along with the transferable skill will sharpen your tool and help you stand out.

Self-Management skills communicate to the employer that you are a stellar employee. These skills help you communicate that you have professional work behaviors and attitudes. Remember that managers hire problem solvers not problem makers. Understanding this skill can also help you address any weakness you may have and help you explain them when asked in the interview: Tell me about your greatest weakness.

These skills can best be fleshed out by understanding Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y of management. McGregor put management in two different camps. A Theory X manager believes that all employees are negative, unmotivated, lazy, incompetent and so forth.

This ideology was perfect for the industrial age. In a time where workers labored away in a factory like cogs in a machine. Management held all power and knowledge of the organization and if a worker was not doing the job correctly then a replacement part was hired and the old was fired.

Today management holds a different view of workers thanks to the human resource and relations movement. Theory Y management knows that employees can be dependable, motivated and have an intrinsic desire to contribute ideas, talent and skill. They are great at

accepting supervision, but can also work well unsupervised. They can also respond satisfactorily to change.

The problem is that sometimes our behavior is like those as described by McGregor's Theory X. Sometimes we are lazy at work and unmotivated. Sometimes we don't accept change in the workplace. The problem is that management is expecting employees to be Theory Y but we act, sometimes, like Theory X employees.

Showing the hiring manager in a Resume, Power Paragraph, or Action Statements that you are a Theory Y employee is vital to helping you stand out against your competitors. Here is a helpful tip. Just saying that you are motivated or passionate or whatever other positive hyperbole you can think of is not good enough. You must do more than tell them, you must show them what you've done. What actions did you take and what were the results of those actions?

Now let's talk about building the resume. *(At this point in the workshop the students were shown three resumes and they were looked at as models of what not to do on a resume. The purpose of this is to break the monotony of lecture and facilitate the entry into the more hands on portion of the workshop. The three resumes can be seen on Appendix B, slides 11,12 &13)*

A resume is your marketing tool. Everything on that document must communicate a strategic plan to assist you in building a professional relationship with the people who have the power to hire you.

In the booklet I have outlined several steps you must take when building a resume. Step one is to include your contact information. It can either look like option one or two depending on how much room you need to take up. The second step is to include a summary of your qualifications. This step is optional and if you do choose to include it then using your Power Paragraph for this summary is a great compliment. How to create a Power Paragraph will come

later in the workshop. Step three, in creating the Resume, is to include your work or professional experience. This is the section where an understanding of the three imperatives will serve you well.

I've included in step three a Matching Sheet. This tool is useful in helping you match the desired qualifications and requirement from the employer to all the skills, talents, experience and qualifications you have to offer. On the left side list the requirements to do the job and on the right side list all of your skills that connect to what the employer wants.

Now that you've identified what skills the employer wants you to have you must word them in a way that helps you stand out. Remember the three imperatives. In the booklet find concept 3.2. This concept will help you write any work-related skill that you want to include. The bullet points at the top of the page are there to help you focus the statement as it will appear on the resume. Please take four minutes and get with a partner and read the simple story about a worker named Jimmy below the bullet points. This is a basic, over simplified example, but it demonstrates a powerful illustration on how to write out a work-related skill.

Now that you've had a chance to read the scenario, answer these questions as if you were Jimmy. What problems have you solved for your employer? What would this fast food joint look like had you not been employed there? What other departments depend on you being a good cashier? *(answers included: increased sales, better customer service, flow of product is better; the kitchen does not get bottle-necked and food stay's warm for customers.)*

Please read the two phrases at the bottom of the page and identify which statement sounds better on a resume? *(answer included: phrase one)* Why? What is it about the first phrase that appears better than the second?

As you turn the page I have included some statements to consider while thinking about the action = results formula (Yates, 2001). Take a moment to read through these. Also, for a list of action words look towards the end of the booklet on the page titled “Action Words for Resume.” These action words are great to start out each statement that is put on your stand out resume.

Turn the page over in the booklet to concept 3.3: Writing out Transferable Skills. Read silently the bullet points and remember that these are here to help you focus your statements as they appear in your resume. I've included in this booklet a list of some transferable skills that employers look for in an employee (Yates, 2001). This list is not exhaustive and is not to be used verbatim on your Resume, Power Paragraph or Action Statements. Remember, that telling the decision maker that you have, for example, great administrative skills is not good enough. You must somehow show the decision maker, through examples from previous work experience that you have good administrative skills. Follow the “show me don't tell me” formula for this section.

Concept 3.4 in the booklet will assist you in writing out any Self-Management skills you possess. I have included a list of the most common personality traits and characteristics that employers look for in their employees (Yates, 2001). Remember the “show me don't tell me” formula also for this section.

Step four is where you can include your education. Your most recent education should be listed first and can appear on the resume either before or after the professional experience. Remember that this resume is your marketing tool and where your education appears on the resume is up to you and what you feel the employer wants to see first. What would appeal greater

to the employer? To see your education first or to know what professional experience you have?

This decision is left up to you!

Let's focus now in creating a great Power Paragraph to use in the first zone or the networking phase of the job search.

Question: True or False-When it comes to looking for a job, it's not what you know it's who you know?

As stated earlier, networking is the best tool you can use to enter the "hidden job market." Networking is defined as building a relationship with the people who have the power to hire you. It is in these relationships that you want to focus most of your energy. A first mistake in networking is thinking that the true/false statement mentioned above is true. The first reason, is that if you know a lot of people, but they are not aware of the collections of skills, talents, and abilities you offer, or what employment you are seeking, they cannot help you. And the second reason this is false is perhaps you do know a lot of people but if you have no personal credibility with them then they will not help you (Berndt, 2010).

The second mistake made in networking is relying solely on social media and the third mistake made by networkers is not asking good questions. The Power Paragraph addresses all three of these mistakes and provides you with a positive and professional experience with the people who have the power to hire you (Berndt, 2010).

The first thing you do is find out who the hiring manager is and then introduce yourself. Tell them your name and what you want. For example: my name is Steven and I am looking for a job as a cashier. The second thing you are going to tell them are three to four accomplishments or skills you have that are action and result oriented. For example you might say that as a cashier you have increased sales by 50 percent because you could help two people in sixty seconds

where the average cashier only serves one person every sixty seconds. You could also say that in the time you've worked as a cashier you have had no variances in the cash drawer; being over or short with the money. The next thing you want to include will be one or two attributes or personal character traits. For this part of the paragraph you might say something along the lines of how reliable you are. For example, you might say you were voted most likely to stay after work to finish a task when others went home. Then you end the Power Paragraph with a good question. You might ask for an interview or ask what you could do to become a part of the organization. Whatever the question, be sure that it is open ended and allows you an opportunity to come back for a follow up.

What we've talked about so far will help you in Zone One: networking to build the relationship with the people who have the power to hire you. I always say that to build a strong relationship two things must be present: a stand out Resume and a stand out Power Paragraph. Remember what was said in the beginning that the average job seeker will spend most their time in front of the computer applying online. A job seeker who desires to stand out above the competition will leave the computer and find the hiring manager. A stand out job seeker will walk into the company and ask for the hiring manager and then do two things face-to-face: give them your Resume and tell them your memorized Power Paragraph.

Creating a Power Paragraph to be used in Zone Two is similar to the Power Paragraph used in zone one, with one difference. A Zone Two Power Paragraph has its purpose in response to usually the first question asked in the interview: Tell me something about yourself? What you don't want to do is waste their time and yours by going into some insignificant auto-biography. They are not concerned with your bio. What you do want to do is provide them with some information that communicates why you are more qualified than the other hundred applicants

waiting to be interviewed. Give the interviewer some examples of the skills and achievements you possess along with one or two attributes or personal characteristics. Take two minutes to write down a Power Paragraph.

Finally in Zone Two and in preparation for the interview, and in order to stand out from the competition, you must go prepared with 15 to 20 Action Statements. These statements are to be connected to the most common asked interview questions. I have included a list of such questions as a guide and can be found in the booklet. To create an Action Statement you must follow this formula. Begin with (I am, I have or I do) then use an action word to finish the phrase. For a list of action words see the next page in the booklet. After you have identified the action you want to communicate, then finish the statement off with the example. A good Action Statement will look something like this: I am dependable for example I received an award for not missing work for one year in my previous employment. Anything you can do to communicate how you can solve the employer's problems and incorporate the three imperative skills is always a plus.

I have included at the end of the booklet a Network List. This list is useful to identify and list out all the potential companies for which you would like to work. The first step is to list them in priority order. Once you have identified where you would like to work your next step will be to find out who the decision maker is for the position you want. Your next move will then be to begin the relationship building process by (a) introducing yourself to the decision maker and (b) telling them what you've memorized as a Power Paragraph. You will then ask them for an interview and follow up when appropriate.

Following the Network List is invaluable! Remember what the average job seeker is doing (sitting in front a computer) all the while you are out making yourself known. If you have ten



decision makers with whom you are actively building a relationship and with whom you are following up every other week, then within a short time you will find yourself accepting a job offer, while others are still waiting for an HR representative to call them about their resume and application they submitted online.

### **Critical Workplace Skills Workshop Survey Evaluation**

I worked with Stuart Bunker, a career coach at the universities Career Cafe and Dr. Lindsey Harvell to procure a class to investigate the material in the Critical Workplace Skills Workshop. I obtained IRB approval to deliver the CWSW to students and administer a survey. After the approval I spoke with Mr. Bunker and presented to him my material. I told him my criteria was to teach primarily a 1010 class, as my research calls for an audience to be made up of mostly freshman. He approved it for delivery and provided me with an opportunity to present the workshop to a class on campus who had previously made a request from his department to discuss job search activities. Mr. Bunker had a class scheduled and handed the assignment over to me. Dr. Harvell connected me to a group of teacher assistants who teach Communication 1010 classes and provided an opportunity to present the Critical Workplace Skills Workshop. In total I was able to present the workshop to 20 individuals and I received 20 evaluations; for a 100 percent evaluation return rate.

The makeup of the audience was mostly freshman ( $M = 1.84$ ,  $SD = .89$ ). See Appendix 1, question #1 for specific wording. When asked if they were working most indicated they were not by raising their hands. Most of the individuals who were working indicated, by raise of the hand, that they were not satisfied with their current jobs. The group was exactly what I needed to get value to the research I was conducting.

Each classroom was set up with a projector and pull down screen. All this, plus a computer with access to Microsoft office suite, was made available. These simple but important devices made the workshop run smoother than I was expecting. I initially planned the workshop around the idea that the room I was going to be in would not have these available free of charge. Since I had no funding for this research, I did not expect to be able to use Microsoft Power Point or any other electronic visual aid.

As the time to deliver the workshop drew closer I was told by Mr. Bunker, that these electronic devices were standard in all classrooms so a quick power point was made to help facilitate transitions between topics in the workshop. However, most of the audience's attention was on a 20 page booklet that I created and provided to them at the beginning of the workshop.

I made sure to shake each individual's hand as they entered the room in hopes to build positive rapport. During the workshop I observed that the participants were actively engaged and fulfilling assignments and requests made by me throughout the workshop. Many individuals had raised their hands during the participation parts of the workshop to seek insight from me on how a sentence might sound in a resume, or to ask some other technical question. After the workshop was over there was a handful of individuals who stayed behind to seek further guidance and coaching concerning their personal resumes and how to approach a potential employer. One student wanted to email me his resume so I could look it over and provide feedback for improvement. After only two weeks of presenting the workshop two participants reported they found a better job and it was because of the information learned in the workshop.

### **Likert Scale Questions**

At the beginning of the workshop and as part of the informed consent to participate, I explained that a survey would be handed out at the end of the hour and requested that it be filled out. The survey consisted of twelve questions; three of which asked how effective the students felt they were in resume writing, interviewing and networking before their college years and up to the point of the workshop. The next three questions inquired whether or not their confidence level in these areas improved as a result of participating in the workshop. And the last three questions asked if they felt there was any value to what they learned in the workshop in helping them become more competitive as a job seeker. Next, the participants were asked to rate the information covered in the workshop and if they would recommend the workshop to their unemployed friends.

The responses to all the questions were identified on a five point Likert scale. The response scales ranged from 1 = lowest or most negative to 5 = highest or most positive. See Appendix A for specific wording. A mean and standard deviation score were totaled for all the responses.

Questions two, three and four, which asked participants to rate their competence/effectiveness in resume writing, interviewing and networking before their college years computed negative to average results. Students felt somewhat competent ( $M = 2.9$ ,  $SD = .94$ ) in finding jobs as well as ineffective ( $M = 2.85$ ,  $SD = .90$ ) in writing a resume. Participants, however, felt average ( $M = 3.2$ ,  $SD = 1.2$ ) when it came to interviewing for a job. Although no questions were asked to identify what average meant, or to what measure of interview success or failure they were applying to reach their answer. I simply wanted to identify their general feeling toward their effectiveness/competence.

The second set of questions, which dealt with participant's confidence after attending the workshop resulted in average to higher confidences. Participants confidence to interview ( $M = 3.8$ ,  $SD = .87$ ) stayed the same, even after attending the workshop. However, participants confidence in applying for a job ( $M = 4.1$ ,  $SD = .3$ ) and standing out as a competitive candidate ( $M = 4.25$ ,  $SD = .43$ ) increased slightly after attending the workshop.

Five questions remain on the survey and they all involved value that the participants felt they received in the workshop. All five produced higher or positive value results on the Likert scale. When asked if there was any value in the workshop, pertaining to applying for a job, participants said that there was much value ( $M = 4.6$ ,  $SD = .58$ ). There was also much value from the workshop in assisting participants interview for a job ( $M = 4.6$ ,  $SD = .48$ ). Participants also said that they were very likely to implement the ideas gleaned from the workshop when next applying for a job ( $M = 4.5$ ,  $SD = .5$ ). The information in the workshop rated better than expected ( $M = 4$ ,  $SD = 1$ ) and the workshop was viewed favorably enough, by the participants, for them to recommend the workshop to their friends ( $M = 4.45$ ,  $SD = .58$ ).

### **Essay Questions**

As part of the survey the participants were asked to answer two essay questions: "What did you like most about your time in the workshop?", and "what did you like least about the workshop?" I was thrilled to see that all 20 participants took time to respond to the first question which provided me with some good positive reinforcement. Seventeen out of 20 respondents answered the second question, which also proved to be useful and timely. These later responses were well-thought and provided meaningful feedback on what they liked least about the workshop.

One of the things I appreciated was the critical feedback I got from the participants. Most of the feedback dealt with the amount of time that was offered; the participants felt there should have been more time. One participant said, "There seemed to be too much information for the time he was allotted." Another said, "It seemed like a lot of information." Yet another said, "too much information, too quick." I understand their frustration as I felt it too. Initially, I designed the workshop to last 90 minutes but ultimately concluded that an hour and a half of technical talk, such as, how to write a resume and network with others would be too much and bore the participants. In the future I feel that in order to overcome this issue I could divide the workshop into two or three classes. Doing this would allow me to focus more deeply on the topics instead of touching on them in broader terms. The time constraints also caused me to mention some topics peripherally while not addressing it head on. For example, one participant who was looking forward to deeper dialogue with interviewing wrote, "we didn't get enough time to expand on the interview stuff." The fact that the participants wanted more time to talk about these topics tells me that perhaps there is a need for this information and that people are interested in knowing how to be better at job searching.

When asked what they liked most about their time in the workshop participants talked about how helpful the information was. One participant said, "It was very informative and created a greater awareness of what companies are looking for in an employee." Another mentioned the usefulness of what was learned about resume writing by saying, "the specifics in building a resume-very useful and helpful information." Another participant said that the workshop "helped with things that actually apply to me at this moment." Other statements speak to the clarity that the workshop provided the participants. One said, "he made it very easy to understand and connect with not only the problems but the solutions." The comment that I feel

had the most impact on me was "resumes and interviewing has always made me cringe. It feels more like a chore and a hassle. But Mr. Holyoak did a good job in presenting it in a fun way that can benefit you tremendously in the long run." I appreciate this because job search talk can be arduous and daunting as well as bland and boring. Knowing that the workshop, at least for one participant, eliminated the drudgery of something that made them "cringe" and turned it into a topic that was bearable is a positive for me.

What I gather from these essay questions is that the information is good and useful, however, 60 minutes to deliver the material may be too short of a time. Either I need to make the workshop longer or split it into multiple workshops. This is great feedback to consider for future workshops as I present them to paying clients. Finding a comfortable amount of time that is not too long so as to not make the information boring or drawn out would be great to identify in future research.

I was pleased to know that the information increased their confidence and added value to their job search agenda and that after the 60 minutes there was a feeling of "we want more, please don't stop," amongst some of the participants. This is seen in responses to the essay questions and also observed when five of the participants actually stayed after the workshop was over to get one-on-one coaching. Some stayed for up to 30 minutes waiting for their turn to talk to me.

One other thing to consider for future research would be figuring out how to implement a platform into the workshop where the participant can discuss their concerns as they come up instead of waiting until the end to talk to the presenter. This would be beneficial, because, if the concern can be addressed during the workshop the participant would not have to remember the issue until the end. Plus, if the issue is not resolved quickly then there is a risk that the participant

may not conceptualize other ideas in the workshop. Another benefit in addressing concerns promptly during the workshop is that perhaps others share the same concerns.

### **Objective Evaluation**

Now, I would like to make a comment on the points of objectives that were discussed earlier in the document. The objectives guided the creation of the research and were discussed in the prospectus meeting.

#### **Create a workshop that brings “hidden market” awareness**

The purpose of this objective was to bring awareness to the participant that there exists a “hidden job market” and offers a solution on how he or she may take advantage of available jobs that are not found online, stored in a job bank, i.e. indeed.com, monster.com, yahoo.com.

The approach to access this market is not for the passive individual, but as discussed in the workshop an individual must take a more proactive role in his or her job search. The key to networking is building a relationship with the people who have the power to hire. This relationship is done by doing three things: Building an action/result oriented resume, memorizing a Power Paragraph, and submitting an application. The “hidden job market” was discussed in the workshop and is representative in the evaluations. Comments like I learned, “how to start networking,” or “I felt like I learned how to stick out with a Power Statement,” are indicative of the principle taught, and an awareness made about the “hidden job market.” Also, individual participants were given time to work out for themselves their own personal Power Paragraph and write it down in the booklet.

#### **Utilize Organizational Communication Theory for the foundation in Workshop**

Making sure the workshop was built on a foundation of theory used by Organizational Communication was key to the success of this workshop. This objective was accomplished by

taking three research topics (Systems theory, Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Douglas McGregor's Theory X and Y) and placing them in a job search context by calling Systems theory a transferable skill; Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs a work-related skill; and McGregor's Theory X and Theory Y a self-management skill. These three "skills" guided the information flow on how to network and interview more effectively.

The conclusion of this objective can be seen in the evaluator's comments when they said, "Resumes and interviewing has always made me cringe. It feels more like a chore and a hassle. But Mr. Holyoak did a good job in presenting it in a fun way that can benefit you tremendously in the long run," also, "It was very informative and created a greater awareness of what companies are looking for in an employee."

A booklet was created so the participant could have something tangible to refer to in the following months and years as he or she approaches searching for a job. The booklet contained the three theoretical skills I called the "Three Imperatives" for networking and interviewing. A comment was made about the booklet: "I liked the packet, I thought it was helpful."

### **Present the workshop to novice job seekers.**

Again as stated earlier in the document, a novice job seeker, as defined by myself, is an individual who has recently graduated from high school and is now enrolled as a college freshman. To obtain this objective I sought out typical freshman courses at the 1010 level. The participants were asked to identify their year in school on the survey. Options for response were: 1-freshman, 2-sophomore, 3- junior, and 4-senior ( $M = 1.84$ ,  $SD = .89$ ). For future research I would like to present the workshop exclusively to freshman who are struggling to find employment and not just to a class where some were employed.



Also, for those who were not employed the struggle to become employed, I felt, did not produce a sufficient element of duress that would drive them to seek coaching through a workshop. I would like to give the workshop to those individuals who are in need of assistance finding work. And then track their time in finding a job and analyze that information. For future research in regards to this objective I would like to see how effective novice job seekers are in applying the principles taught in the workshop on their own and how long it would take the individuals to procure employment.

**Give at least one workshop to 20-30 participants.**

This objective was accomplished in March of 2014. Two workshops were needed to be given in order to achieve the desired result. The first workshop was given the second week in March and the second workshop was given the third week in March. Twenty participants were in attendance between the two workshops and 20 evaluations were received.

I am grateful to Mr. Bunker and Dr. Harvell for going outside the scope of convenience in helping me obtain the needed sample size for the research. As a result of their help I was able to be in front of these individuals and present the workshop to participants who fell within my defined parameters for what I considered a “novice job seeker.” I was hopeful to get a class size to help me reach my goal of 30 participants, however, as the semester came to a close my opportunity to be in front of a 1010 class diminished. Any future opportunity I have to do this research would be supplemented greatly by receiving evaluations of 30 participants instead of 20.

**Receive Evaluations**

As stated earlier in the document I received a 100 percent return rate on the evaluations. I provided the evaluation (in the form of a survey) after the workshop had ended. The evaluation

consisted of 12 survey questions and two essay questions. The workshop ended 10 minutes early to allow sufficient time for each participant to fill out the survey and provide input through the two essay questions. All participants finished before the ten minute mark and placed their finished surveys on a designated table after which they were collected and put in a secure place for reasons of confidentiality.

### **Conclusion**

I set out in this endeavor to create a workshop that would bring awareness to a novice job seeker the tools necessary to be competitive in the hiring process. This research coupled with its resulting evaluations is to be used as a platform to start a business that will assist many individuals who are leaving the adolescent world and entering the adult world. As unemployment rates do not improve and with more and more experienced career oriented adults being-laid off, the competition for any job becomes more and more fierce.

Competency in finding a job and being competitive is invaluable to an emerging adult who may still be naïve to the competition. Academia alone, learned in high school, is not sufficient to make a novice job seeker stand out from the plethora of skilled workers that are ready to work and willing to work anywhere doing anything just to keep the bill collectors off their back.

The desire of this workshop is to create for the illiterate job seeker a place above his or her competition. To provide a novice job seeker with basic tools that can be learned and the confidence to have them applied immediately after participation. This I believe was accomplished.

On an academic note I am thrilled to use theory in a way that can be applied in a practical way and that can prove useful to benefiting the lives of others and the community. For when an

individual becomes self-reliant then that individual power to help themselves, family and their community increases. This is the exciting part of learning theory; the possibilities of what it can do when applied correctly.

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## Appendix A

**Please read each question carefully and circle the answer that most describes you.**

**Please circle your current year of study.**

Freshman	Sophomore	Junior	Senior
1	2	3	4

**As a senior in high school how competent did you feel you were in finding a job?**

Not competent	Somewhat competent	Uncertain	Competent	Highly competent
1	2	3	4	5

**How effective was your resume as a senior in high school?**

Very ineffective	Ineffective	Average	Effective	Very effective
1	2	3	4	5

**How effective were you, as a senior in high school, in an interview setting?**

Very ineffective	Ineffective	Average	Effective	Very effective
1	2	3	4	5



**After attending this workshop which best describes your confidence now in applying for a job?**

Decrease greatly	Decrease slightly	Stay the same	Increase slightly	Increase greatly
1	2	3	4	5

**After attending this workshop which best describes your confidence now in interviewing for a job?**

Decrease greatly	Decrease slightly	Stay the same	Increase slightly	Increase greatly
1	2	3	4	5

**After attending this workshop which best describes your confidence in “standing out” as a competitive candidate for the job you want?**

Decrease greatly	Decrease slightly	Stay the same	Increase slightly	Increase greatly
1	2	3	4	5

**Remembering back to the information covered in the workshop about applying for a job, is there any value in what you learned about making yourself “standout” to get contacted for an interview?**

No value	Limited value	Average value	Much value	Extreme value
1	2	3	4	5

**Remembering back to the information covered in the workshop about interviewing for a job, is there any value in what you learned about making yourself “standout” to get the job?**

No value	Limited value	Average value	Much value	Extreme value
1	2	3	4	5

**Considering the information you learned in the workshop about applying for a job how likely are you to implement these ideas the next time you search for a job?**

Not likely	Somewhat likely	Neutral	Very likely	Extremely likely
1	2	3	4	5

**How would you rate the information in this workshop?**

Poor	Unremarkable	Meets expectations	Better than expected	Outstanding
1	2	3	4	5

**How favorable would this information be to someone you know who is struggling with unemployment?**

Very unfavorable	Unfavorable	Neutral	Favorable	Very favorable
1	2	3	4	5

In the space provided please answer the following two questions:

**What did you like most about your time in the workshop?**

**What did you like least about the workshop?**

## Appendix B

# CRITICAL WORKPLACE SKILLS WORKSHOP

Standing out in your resume, networking and interviewing

## STANDING OUT

- What is the most common method used by others to find an available job?

## 20 PERCENT OF AVAILABLE JOBS

**what**

job title, keywords or company name

**where**

city, state or zip code

[Advanced Job Search](#)

▼ **Location**

Cedar City, UT (106)

▼ **Job Type**

Full-time (84)

Part-time (15)

Contract (2)

Internship (0)

Temporary (3)

424 jobs available in the "Hidden Market"

## GAINING ACCESS TO THE HIDDEN MARKET

- Non-growth companies experience a 15 percent turnover.
- Networking = building relationships with people who have the power to hire you.

	Average job seeker	Stand out job seeker
Networking	Little-None	Most
Applying online	Most-All	Some

## STANDING OUT



- Transferable Skills
- Work-Related Skills
- Self-Management Skills

## TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

### Body is made up of Systems

- Sub-systems
- Interdependent

### Organizations are made up of departments, teams, groups.

- Identify the individuals, groups, teams, departments who are dependent on you.
- What skills, achievements or characteristics do you have that can solve a potential employer's problems?

...you begin to see your position in terms of how “the boss” sees the organization. You can start to see problems and worries associated with their job as a manager of a department and how each section of the organization could relate to each other.

“Believe it or not, very few people have a clear fix on what they do for a living. Oh, I know; you ask a typist what he or she does, and you get, “Type stupid.” You ask an accountant, and you hear, “Fiddle with numbers, what do you think?” And that is the problem. Most people don't look at their work beyond these simplistic terms. They never examine the implications of their jobs in relation to the overall success of the department and the company.”

## Work Related Skills

### Lower Level

"I only applied because I saw it paid well."

Non-professional dress.

### Higher Level

Creativity can be utilized.

Skills are matched to the job sought after.

## Self-Management Skills

Employers want problem solvers NOT problem makers



Telecommunications Sales and Installation - 2009 to 2012

- Lead Generation
- Offered Multiple Products from Multiple Companies
- Designed and Printed my own Sales Material
- Hired and Managed Employees
- The only Sales Rep. Authorized by Avenue Broadband to install his own Sales
- Quickly Mastered Handling Customers at Home, in the Office, and on the Phone

Graphic Designer - 2004 to 2009

- Designed Layouts and Graphics for Multiple Kinds of Printed Materials
- Responsible for Formatting Bi-Monthly Magazine with more than 10,000 Readers
- Proof Reading and Formatting for Soft-Cover Books
- Various and Sundry Ministry Duties
- Designed and Printed Weekly Church Program
- Got Self Right, and Gained International Corporate Experience

Marijuana Dealer and Nefarious Dude - 1999 to 2004

Nashville & Middle Tennessee

- Intuitive Understanding of Supply and Demand Economics.
- Good With Money
- Ran my own Delivery Service.
- Had a Consistent Clientele with High Customer Satisfaction
- Gained Intimate Access to Several very Exclusive County Jails.
- Learned a Valuable Life Lesson.

Experienced in all 50 States. More Services Available upon Request... Seriously!

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ERIC

OBJECTIVE

To claw my way to the top using any means necessary...but then be a fair and just robot, and bring your company to new heights, or whatever

PERSONAL ATTRIBUTES

- Cat-like reflexes - now you see me, meow you don't
- Possible ESP
- Knows when to hold, knows when to fold
- Emits pleasant aroma(s)
- Horse-like laugh (optional)
- Extremely proficient in MarioKart for Super Nintendo
- Not bad at "sexy" dancing
- 29 years old but have the facial hair of a 13 yr old
- Can eat a LOT at one sitting. Oh, also I can moonwalk quite well

EXPERIENCE

- I am quite experienced with the McDonald's Menu
- One time I rode a horse but it bucked me off. I was injured and ended up gaining like 30lbs but then I shed that weight like snakeskin. very fast metabolism
- I have enough knowledge to write an essay on pretty much any subject (without researching it)
- Acne luner
- Life coach

EDUCATION

- Finished High school by the skin of my teeth. (1999)
- Spent most of time daydreaming out window but if you here me things will be different. I swear

APPLICATION FOR EMPLOYMENT

I refer to the recent death of the Technical Manager at your Company and hereby apply for the replacement of the deceased Manager.

Each time I apply for a job, I get a reply that there's no vacancy but in this case I have caught you red-handed and you have no excuse because I even attended the funeral to be sure that he was truly dead and buried before applying.

Attached to my letter is a copy of my CV and his death Certificate.

Thank You! Good morning