

## Section V: Get Ready to Talk – Cold Calls and Interview Preparation

Sections I – IV helped you gather the information and tools for a successful search for work experience. Key tools/topics reviewed included:

- Self-assessment to understand your strengths and skills. Also feedback, referrals and suggestions from friends, relatives and other adults about potential work experience opportunities.
- An update of your personal data form so it is ready to use. (Make sure that you have 3 references with contact information who are ready to speak about you)
- A nice-looking resume
- Appropriate working papers issued by your school district (if you are under 18).
- Having forms ready to use that will help you keep track of what agencies/ employers you contact, where you submit an application, and what username and password you use for an online application. Be organized!

Now it's time to use these tools to contact and pursue work experience opportunities in a live setting – it's time to talk!

1) **Cold calls:** Sometimes there are opportunities available that are “hidden” - the employer has not advertised an available position. *Cold calling* is when you contact an agency or business directly to ask if they have any jobs available. You can make a cold call in person by going to the location and asking to speak to the manager. You can also make a cold call by phone. Either way, make sure that you have prepared to introduce yourself and explain that you are looking for work experience. See the Sample Cold Call Scripts on the next page.

Before you make any cold call, take some time to learn something about the agency or business you want to contact. Visit a business to observe the types of services that employees perform. You can also reach out to current employees who work there to ask what their workplace is like. Finally, look at the *About Us* section on company's website to understand the company's values and mission. All these steps will help you to make a good impression when you make that cold call.



If you decide to make cold calls by visiting locations, make sure that you are dressed for the occasion – don't wear clothing like jeans, t-shirts, tank tops, etc. Also, bring a folder that has copies of your resume and personal data form (in case you are asked to fill out an application). Bring a copy of Record of Contacts Made and Record of Applications Completed so you can keep track of your visits.

If you decide to make cold calls by phone, make sure you are in a location that is quiet and without distractions. Make sure to have a copy of Record of Contacts Made handy so you can keep track of your calls.

2) **Interviews:** After you have made cold calls, or after you have submitted written or online job applications, you may be invited to an interview. Make sure that you prepare yourself before you go! Make sure to:

- Learn as much as you can about the company
- Prepare for common questions asked in an interview
- Look good!
- Bring copies of your resume and personal data form

Read the Job Interview Tips and develop answers to the Sample Job Interview Questions included on the next pages.

**Forms included in this section:**

- Sample Cold Call Scripts
- Job Interview Tips
- Sample Job Interview Questions



## Sample Cold Call Scripts

Here are two samples of basic cold call scripts to use in person or by phone.

### Sample 1:

Good afternoon. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. May I please speak with someone about work experience opportunities here at \_\_\_\_\_ (name of business/company/agency/organization) and how to apply.

### Sample 2:

Good afternoon. My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I'm a student at Peekskill High School. I'd like to speak with the appropriate person please to discuss the possibility of my having a work experience with your \_\_\_\_\_ (business/company/agency/organization) this summer.

If you are making a cold call based on a referral and you know to whom you want to speak), start your call like this:

Good afternoon. May I speak to \_\_\_\_\_ (John Doe), please.

If asked the reason why you are calling or have stopped by, you can say:

I am looking for work experience. It was suggested that I speak with \_\_\_\_\_ (use person's name, i.e. Mr. Doe) to learn about available opportunities for high school students in your \_\_\_\_\_ (business/company/ agency/ organization).

# Job Interview Tips

## Don't Be Late!

- The very most important thing is to be on time! If you are late, no matter how prepared you are - you will have already left a bad impression with the employer. Aim to arrive 10 to 15 minutes before your appointment.
- Make sure you know how to get to the location. Try to go there a few days earlier, at the same time as your appointment. This will help to ensure you are able to arrive on time on the interview day.

## Be Prepared

- Learn about the company. If you are applying for a specific position, understand the job description. This will help you answer interview questions, such as, "Why do you want to work here?"... "Why do you want this position?"
- Anticipate questions, prepare answers, and practice answering questions.
- Dress appropriately for the interview. Select your outfit to look your best. Do NOT wear clothing like jeans, t-shirts, tank tops, miniskirts, etc.
- Bring your completed Personal Data Form, Make sure that you have accurate information about your 3 references.
- Make sure you bring a copy of your resume.

## Be Confident But Not Overconfident

- Silence your mobile phone.
- Don't chew gum or candy.
- Listen carefully to the interview questions, think before answering. Answer questions honestly, completely and, where possible, in full sentences.
- Be prepared to speak about and to give examples of your experiences, skills, strengths and talents, which support your being a good candidate for a position. Examples could include babysitting, lawn mowing, volunteering, school projects, extracurricular activities, etc.

## Be Professional

- Shake hands firmly.
- Speak formally and make eye contact.
- Be prepared to ask a few questions about the position. Inquire about the next steps in your being considered to be hired.
- Thank the person for the interview.

**Good Luck!!**

## Sample Job Interview Questions

### Job Interview Questions I May Be Asked

- Tell me about yourself?  
Answer:

- What are your strengths? What are your weaknesses?  
Answer:

- Why are you interested in this job? This company?  
Answer: