

FAMOUS APPLICANTS SCHOOL

COURSE OUTLINE: Applicant 101

Job Search

Do not fill out your Job Search book in alphabetical order. For one, it is extremely rare (and perhaps anal retentive) for job seekers to visit potential employers in alphabetical order. This might give the impression to a welfare worker that you had just copied a page out of the business section of the phone book. It would also be advisable to vary the dates of your visits, so that the welfare worker won't question how someone with little get-up-and-go could drop by twenty businesses within three hours of their next welfare office appointment.

If possible, transpose a few of phone numbers in your Job Search book, so that if a welfare worker tries to call an employer, he/she will give up in frustration after a few wrong numbers. It should also be possible to network with your friends, picking up extra copies of Job Applications from some of the major employers, filling them out, then making Xerox copies which should then be folded six times, wrinkled, with coffee spills and candy smears. Destroy the originals, lest they fall into enemy hands (i.e. the employer might actually call you and want you to start work immediately).

Grooming

When keeping an appointment at the welfare office, do not wear Gucci loafers, designer jeans, more gold jewelry than King Tut, and a leather jacket that would make a Coach bag look like dead meat. Use eye shadow only to give the appearance of dialysis, not to increase your allure with your caseworker, who hates all people in general.

The proper, dysfunctional wardrobe should include: a dirty t-shirt with beer logo or vulgar slogan, thrift-shop sneakers (no Air Nikes, please), a garage sale zipper jacket with a volunteer fire department logo, and corduroy slacks that have never been pressed. If you must wear jewelry, a simple safety pin through one nostril should suffice.

Documentation

You may be asked for documentation to explain your absence from the last three appointments. Your case worker will not believe that your alarm clock broke, because you already pawned it for a six-pack. Doctor's notes can be helpful, but should use current medical technology, with proper spelling. Consumption and ague are dated terms, and dropsy is a third-world illness, not a state of terminal clumsiness. "Very thin and frail - she cannot work" is an acceptable explanation from an MD with a green card, unless you tip the scales at 300 lbs.

Parking

While it is preferable for you to keep your appointment via public transportation (and be sure to ask for tokens for your return trip), if you are running late on other appointments, such as street-corner pharmaceutical sales conventions, park your gold-trimmed BMW at least four city blocks away from the welfare office. Do not park in a tow-away zone - this could eradicate all profit from your elaborate charade.

Subject-Object Agreement

To be convincing as an applicant, you should try to speak broken English, even if you're a fourteenth-generation American. We are not talking Ebonics here - that may someday be viewed as a legitimate tongue. We are talking pathetic grammar in oral communication, and abominable spelling in written communication.

Examples:

Don't Say

I attempted to establish a mutually agreeable time for an interview with the personnel manager.

I am concerned that if I don't maintain health insurance coverage, I will find it increasingly difficult to front-end my prescription costs.

Do Say:

Loike, I tried to talk wit' da bloke what's in charge, but she wouldn't give me da time of day, da hoity-toity bitch.

I gots to take my meds - where's my f'in Medicaid card!

For examples of pathetic written communication, see **Appendix A**, which includes actual case histories of correspondence between applicants and welfare offices.

Metal Detectors, etc.

Plan a safe stash for all metallic objects which can be retrieved quickly following an appointment, but which is not within range of the security guard (with glaucoma). Items such as medallions, hub caps, knives, tire irons, AK-47s, lock picks and hypodermic needles will raise havoc with metal detectors, give the guard a coronary, and give a false impression to your case worker that you were already gainfully, if not legally, employed.

Carrying significant amounts of metal on your person is inadvisable during thunderstorms. By the same token, it would not be advisable to pack your pockets with large quantities of rogue pharmaceuticals, powders, potions and nostrums, which could give the senior citizen sitting next to you in the waiting room an asthma attack.

Waiting Room Etiquette

When you arrive for your appointment (a half-hour late because "I had some important business to attend to!"), announce your name in a loud voice, then demand to see your worker immediately. This will so irritate your case worker that she will forget that you are a half-hour late for the appointment yesterday, but she will derive some small pleasure in making you wait twelve additional minutes today.

Sounds Like a Lot of Work

Welfare application is not for the squeamish. By going to elaborate measures you will not only ensure your continued public benefit, but will also provide intellectual stimulation for your bored-to-tears case worker (who once had a stress-free job as foreman of a steel foundry, or air traffic controller before Reagan). Welfare reform is a double-edged sword. With new rules will come new opportunities for creative documentation, imaginative employment avoidance, and innovative appointment bypass. Only you can decide if you have what it takes to be an **APPLICANT**, but we at the Famous School are ready to help you achieve this goal.

APPENDIX B – CREATIVE EMPLOYMENT AVOIDANCE

In those extreme circumstances where employment is actually offered to you, you may be able to avoid gainful employment while maintaining public assistance eligibility by quick thinking and decisive action.

Baseball Cap

Turn the brim of your cap sideways or backwards, and your potential employer will automatically subtract 50 from your theoretical I.Q.

Beeper

Arrange to have your friends call you repeatedly during the job interview. This will suggest to your potential employer that you are already in business, and in the instance of drug stores or supermarkets with pharmacy departments, might be a serious competitor. In such instances, conflict of interest rules could preclude your employment.

Character References

List your bail bondsman as a character reference. After all, he can vouch that you always appear at arraignments (or else his firm would be hurting). This will suggest to your potential employer that local government might wish to call on you frequently to testify in various and sundry court proceedings - which would not reflect on your own activities, but could interfere with keeping regular hours at the store or shop.

Day Care Responsibilities

Bring along all your children, and several of your neighbors' children (especially the ones with overactive mucus membranes), to suggest that you can't afford to work and pay for day care at the same time, and the likelihood that one of your children will be ill any given day exceeds the likelihood that Alan Greenspan and the Federal Reserve Board will screw up the economy of the northeast by focusing on the cost of living and employment rate in Oklahoma.

Extreme Measures

Hire one of those Sing-O-Gram companies to send a messenger dressed in police garb, who will pretend to take you into custody during the job interview. A little expensive, but guaranteed to please.

Inappropriate Comments

When applying for a janitor position at the local Mercedes dealer, ask about employee discounts. Similarly, ask about a company store at a pharmaceutical plant, or suggest to Agway that you would be willing to barter your services for 2,000 lbs. of ammonium nitrate fertilizer. For good measure, ask about their Employee Assistance Program for substance abusers - tell them you have a friend with a problem.