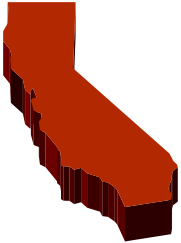


# Family Transition Network

Your connection to Academics, Employment and Transition



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### Family Transition Network Mission:

To provide transition information, training, and resources to parents, students and families in assisting the student through the process of transition to a quality adult life.

## Transition Journeys

### Challenges & Successes

Dear Families, Educators and Key Stakeholders,

Welcome to our second edition of Transition Journeys! In this edition, we offer students information on getting ready to go to work. You will find information regarding appearance, interviews, work permits and “the first day on the job.” We hope these articles will assist students and their families with a smooth transition to employment.

We have added tip boxes for our students to learn the little things that are so important for a successful job interview. Look for the tips on “Who Needs a Work Permit and Why.” We have also included information on a variety of resources available in the WorkAbility I Program.

Also in this edition, please enjoy the story of our Transition Journey student, Danielle. We invite WorkAbility programs across California to join our efforts to provide tools to students in special education, by sharing your transition journey stories in our newsletter. Please enjoy this second edition of Transition Journeys.

Sincerely,

*The Family Transition Network Committee*

# Danielle's Journey

Meet Danielle Anderson (Dani), a Thousand Oaks High School Graduate, Class of 2004. In her junior year, Danielle participated in Workability's Pre-employment Training Skills Program. She developed a portfolio, learned how to get a job and keep a job, participated in a mock interview with a local employer and took assessments on career exploration and learning styles. She learned skills about attitude on the job and how to maintain a personal budget. Dani credits Workability for many of the skills that got her to the point she has reached in her career.

The summer after her junior year, Dani participated in a life-changing event. Workability provided her information about the Youth Leadership Forum for Students with Disabilities (YLF). At the Sacramento forum, students learn leadership skills, disability history and culture, and meet students their own age and successful adults with disabilities. Through this experience, Dani connected with people in a career area she liked. These connections helped her start a career pathway to the field of her interest.

The summer after graduation, Dani began working at Kohl's Department store as a cashier. In the Fall of 2004, she began taking classes at the local community college.

Throughout the next couple of years, Dani continued working at Kohl's, attended classes at Moorpark College, and started a new job at Downey Savings and Loan. She also became involved in the planning and production of the Youth Leadership Forum, the Advisory Commission on Special Education, and other Sacramento committee work.

In 2006, it became evident that in order to further her career, Dani had to take a leap of faith: she relocated to Sacramento, where she had more career opportunities.

In December 2006, Dani moved into her own place in Sacramento. She enrolled at Sacramento City College and began working for the California Health Incentives Improvement Project (CHIIP) grant. This position allowed her to speak about youth leadership & development at conferences around the country, and to assist in the grant goal of removing barriers to employment and self-sufficiency of people with disabilities.

After working at CHIIP for more than a year, Dani decided to pursue employment with the State of California. She took the necessary state exam and was placed on the eligibility list. When a position at the Department of Rehabilitation opened up, she applied, interviewed, and was offered the job. With the assistance of the LEAP Program, a tool for people with disabilities to gain employment with the state, Dani overcame several challenges and began her civil service career in June 2008.

Recently, Dani was a panelist at the California Secondary Transition Conference where she discussed her experience as a Youth Leadership Forum alumnus and as a community leader involved in state boards, school organizations, and program planning. The panelists support the belief that youth are the ultimate experts and should play a bigger role in planning programs that impact.

Today, Dani is living happily in Sacramento, and enjoys her work. Way to go Dani!

# Interview Skills

## JOB INTERVIEW TIPS

The dreaded interview: perhaps the hardest part of the job application process, but also the most important. There are several key points to remember before you are interviewed.

### WHAT SHOULD I WEAR?

A picture is worth a thousand words and so is your appearance. Your interviewer gets much of his/her first impression from your appearance. Wear nice clothes and use your judgment on how dressy they should be. If you're unsure, dress conservatively. Hair should be neat and avoid strong perfume or cologne.

### HOW SHOULD I ACT?

First and foremost, be honest - don't try to act like someone you're not. However, there are a few guidelines on how to act:

- ◆ Be diplomatic, polite, and try to answer questions with more than yes or no answers.
- ◆ Have a positive attitude.
- ◆ When asked a question, be thoughtful. You don't have to give an answer right away.
- ◆ If you don't understand the question, it's okay to say "I'm not sure I understand the question."
- ◆ Look your interviewer in the eye; it shows honesty and interest.
- ◆ Use a nice, firm handshake.
- ◆ Pay attention to the interviewer.
- ◆ Be self-confident.

### WHAT WILL I BE ASKED?

Questions vary from one interview to the next, but some typical questions are almost always asked.

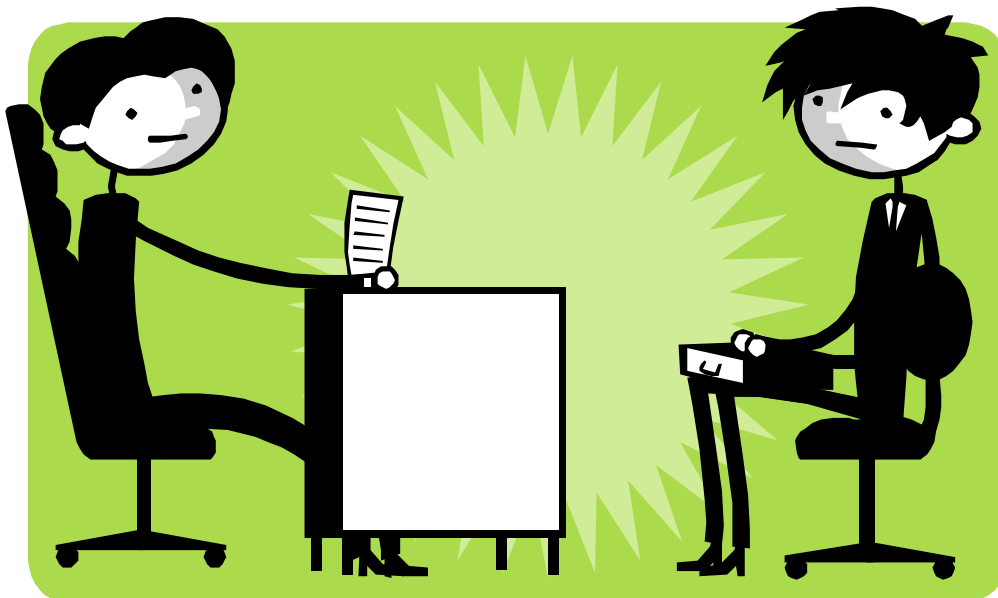
- ◆ Why are you interested in this job?
- ◆ Tell me about yourself.
- ◆ What days and hours are you available to work?
- ◆ What are your strengths? Weaknesses?

## WHAT ELSE SHOULD I DO BEFORE THE INTERVIEW?

Get yourself prepared. Make sure you are familiar with the employer. Think of questions you may have about the job and employer. Practice interviewing with a parent, friend or teacher. Be well rested. Be on time! (Ten minutes early is best.)

## WHAT SHOULD I DO AFTER THE INTERVIEW?

Wait several days before contacting the employer about the status of your application. (If the employer indicated a period of time by which you would be contacted, wait until it is over.) While you are waiting, apply for other jobs and obtain more interviews.



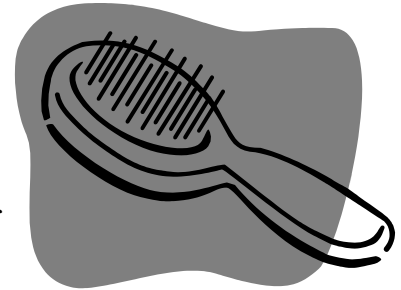
### Interview Preparation Checklist

- I have the name and location of the interview with directions.
- I have arranged my transportation.
- I have the date and time of interview.
- I know what time I need to leave for the interview to be on time.
- I prepared my interview outfit.
- I know my strengths and weaknesses and can explain them.
- I have practiced interview questions.
- I have a copy of my resume and portfolio.

I AM READY!

# Appearance Matters!

Your appearance is the first thing that people notice about you. Before you open your mouth, shake hands, fill out an application, or interview, your appearance already makes an impression on how people think about you. So...LOOK YOUR BEST! That doesn't mean you need to spend a lot of money on clothes, it just means:



- 1) Be clean! Shower, shave, wash hair and brush teeth. You'll be surprised how far that goes! Don't forget the deodorant! Choose your clothes in advance. Pick them out the night before, and make sure everything is clean, not stained, torn or missing buttons. The outfit should be coordinated with similar colors and not too flashy. Wear what you would wear on the job.
- 2) Part of being neat and clean is having trimmed fingernails – not too long, definitely not dirty, and nothing that looks like it might get in the way of your work!
- 3) Do you wear jewelry? If so, make sure it isn't over the top or too distracting (the tongue ring should come out). If the interviewer/manager is focused on your jewelry, she/he can't pay attention to you! Another distraction is tattoos. If you have any, keep them covered at first. Check company policy – some workplaces don't allow piercings and tattoos.
- 4) Don't leave a wave of cologne/aftershave/perfume behind you! Some people are really sensitive to smells.
- 5) While you're at it, keep the makeup to a minimum. Just another distraction.
- 6) **TURN OFF YOUR CELL PHONE!** Having it ring while you're in an interview or on the job training would not be cool. If you're carrying a purse, bag, or backpack, make sure everything is neat.
- 7) And most of all let your wonderful self shine through!

# Attendance Rules for Work

**THERE ARE FOUR IMPORTANT ATTENDANCE RULES TO REMEMBER!**

## 1. THE “WHEN” RULE

Tell your employer as soon as you know that you won't be coming into work. This will give the employer time to find a replacement for your shift.

Example: I won't be able to work next Tuesday because I have a Track Meet.

Example: You woke-up with the flu and you are scheduled to work tonight. Call your employer this morning.

## 2. THE “WHY” RULE

Always go to work unless you have a good reason. **WHY** you are absent is important.

Examples: Illness, Family Event or Personal Necessity.

Bad Examples: I want to go to a party tonight so I'm not coming to work.  
I'm too tired to come to work.

## 3. THE “HOW” RULE

Always explain your reason for missing work. **HOW** you make this explanation is important.

Example: I won't be able to come to work today because I'm not feeling well.

## 4. THE “WHO” RULE

When you call in, give your message to the person in charge. **WHO** you speak to is important.



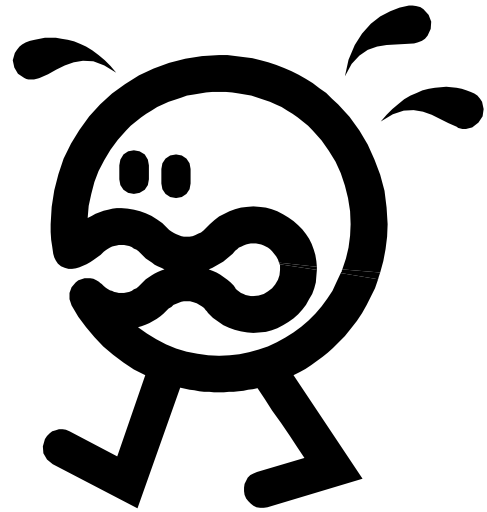
Example: Call your manager. Leave a voice mail if you cannot reach them.

Bad Example: Tell a friend you work with to tell your manager. (They might forget to tell the manager.)

# First Day at Work and I'm a Little Nervous!

When starting a new job, everyone is anxious! Giving our students a little information on what to expect will make their first day much easier.

1. Make sure you eat breakfast! You will need the energy.
2. Make sure your clothing is appropriate for your job.
3. Take a shower, brush your teeth, and comb your hair. If you look prepared to work, you will be.
4. When you get to your job, greet your co-workers and introduce yourself.
5. Be sure you know your daily schedule.
6. Ask your supervisor where and at what time you should have lunch and breaks.
7. Write down your schedule in your day planner or calendar.
8. If you need help remembering your duties, write them down, ask a co-worker to help you write them down, or use PECS (Picture Exchange System).
9. If you are to use machinery on your job make sure you are trained and fully understand how to safely operate it.
10. At the end of your first week, ask your supervisor how you did and if you can improve in any areas.
11. Keep communication open between you and your co-workers, as they can help you with questions that you have.
12. And, finally: Relax! Learn all you can and enjoy your work experience.



## TIP

On the first day of work you will have to fill out some paperwork. In addition, it is important to make sure you have a **Work Permit** if you are under 18.

### What is a Work Permit?

If you are under 18 years of age you will need a work permit. You may contact your high school to find out where to pick up a **Statement of Intent to Employ Minor and Request for Work Permit** or go to the following website (<http://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/dlseformB1-1.pdf>). You will be given information on the steps to get the work permit. You can contact the following sites to get more information to learn about work permits and the guidelines for working if you are under 18.

<http://www.cde.ca.gov/ci/ct/we/wpfaq.asp>

<http://www.dir.ca.gov/dlse/DLSE-CL.htm>

### What is WorkAbility 1?

**WorkAbility 1** is a school and community transition program working to benefit students, employers and the community at large. It successfully meets the needs of local job markets.

**WorkAbility 1** promotes independent living and provides comprehensive pre-employment and follow-up services for youth in special education.

**WorkAbility 1** provides secondary special education students ages 14 to 22 the opportunity to obtain marketable job skills while completing their education.

The Family Transition Network Committee would like to invite you to submit articles about your student's transition journeys that you would like to share with our readers. We welcome comments on our current newsletter. Please contact the Family Transition Network chairperson listed below.

### The Family Transition Network Committee

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