

# Job Readiness


**Assisting Your Job Seekers to Overcome Barriers to Employment**

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## Learning Objectives

**After attending this session participants will be better able to:**

- Section 1) Execute Placement Roles and Responsibilities
- Section 2) Assess Customer Skills and Job Readiness
- Section 3) Plan Effective Job Search Strategies & Resources
- Section 4) Hone Customer Interviewing Skills

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## Job Retention Services (1)



- OVR will serve and prioritize individuals who are currently working and at immediate risk of losing their job due to a disability-related issue.
  - Job retention includes individuals who were placed in the Order of Selection for MSD, SD and NSD.
  - Individuals seeking services under this exemption are limited to job retention services only.
- Job retention bypasses the waitlist to meet an OVR priority to help meet part of OVR's mission to help people with disabilities already working to maintain their job.
- The person has an **immediate risk** of losing their **current, primary job** due to their disability.
- Individuals still need to meet current eligibility standards to receive OVR services. AND the person is in immediate risk of losing their job due to their disability.

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## Job Retention Services (2)



- OVR's job retention does not apply to loss of a recent job or jeopardy to losing your current job due to economic conditions or other non-disability related reasons.
- The only services that can be provided are those needed to retain employment
- Only the following Supported Employment options are available:
  - Intermittent SE Services
  - Job Retention Services
  - Job Mentoring Services

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### **OVR Mission & Goals**

“To assist Pennsylvanians with disabilities secure and maintain employment and independence.”

- OVR services are provided to **individuals** to prepare for, enter into, engage in, or retain competitive integrated employment.
- OVR services for **employers and the business community** assist them in recruiting and hiring qualified employees with disabilities, develop retention strategies and learn about disability-related issues.

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### **Who's Responsible?**

- The **Customer & You**, the customer's in collaboration the entire agency team.
- **Everyone** is responsible to perform tasks that directly or indirectly supports our job seekers to achieve and retain **competitive integrated employment.**
- **Employers** are an essential partner in achieving successful job placements for OVR customers with disabilities.
- We have two primary customers:
  - **Supply side talent**.....Customer job seekers
  - **Demand side employers**.....Business partners

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### **Business Relationships**

**It's all about building & maintaining relationships**


- Marketing our services and our customers with disabilities.
  - If we refer a “not job-ready” customer to an employer, we won't get repeat business.
- Don't start with the big sell of your customer(s).
  - Speak their language-speak to their bottom line
  - Find out what the business needs: types of workers, support services
  - Discuss no cost services: disability etiquette, ADA accessibility evaluations, job retention, OJTs...
- Take time to build trust, you can ruin the business relationship with a bad placement.
  - Bad placements can destroy the chance for future successful placements.

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## Assess Customer Skills & Job Readiness

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Assessing Customer Skills and Job Readiness (1 of 14)



**The First Meeting**


- Set the stage with your customer: **you are here to help them get a job**
- Discuss transferable skills from past work or life experiences
- Test if they're invested: give assignments leading to plan development
  - **ONET**: <https://www.onetonline.org/>
    - Interest Profiler-Holland code then connects to requirements of various jobs that match the code
  - Create a sample application and resume

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Assessing Customer Skills and Job Readiness (2 of 14)




**Assess the Customer's Barriers to Employment**

- Benefits Disincentives
- Health and Disability status
- Transportation Issues
- Child care
- Criminal Records
- Disclosing Disability
- Resume
- Interviewing

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Assessing Customer Skills and Job Readiness (3 of 14)


**Benefits Counseling**

- SSI/SSDI Beneficiary?
  - Attend the Benefits Counseling Workshop by [AHEDD: www.ahedd.org](http://www.ahedd.org)
  - Retain paystubs, paychecks, payment records
  - Visit [SSA](http://www.ssa.gov) website for Red Book: [www.ssa.gov](http://www.ssa.gov)
- Other Public Benefits?
  - Food Stamps (SNAP), Cash Assistance, Medical Assistance,
  - Energy Assistance, Low-Cost Housing
  - [Department of Human Services: www.dhs.pa.gov](http://www.dhs.pa.gov)

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Assessing Customer Skills and Job Readiness (4 of 14)


**Health & Disability**

- Is the disability stable?
  - Plan the job search and application accordingly if there are any major medical procedures planned in the near future.
- What medical, dental or vision issues does you customer have? Do they require additional & ongoing services?
- Are there any side effects of medications that may affect behavior and work?

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### **Drug and Alcohol**

- Does your customer have a co-existing drug and/or alcohol history?
  - Are they in treatment such as AA, NA, OP TX?
  - They need to maintain treatment when necessary.
  
- Will they pass a drug test?
  - If they use legally prescribed medications that could flag a drug test. They may need to disclose when appropriate.
    - Including medical marijuana


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### **Transportation**

- Do they have a valid driver's license?
- How will they get to work: car, bus, carpool?
- Is the job on the bus route?
- Do they have a reliable backup transportation plan?
- Is no-cost parking available?
- Are they required to drive or travel as part of the job?

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Assessing Customer Skills and Job Readiness (7 of 14)



**Child Care**


- Does your customer have a plan for daily childcare?
- Can the customer afford daily childcare?
- Does your customer have a plan for emergency childcare: family member or neighbor?
- Resources:
  - [HeadStart](http://www.paheadstart.org) - [www.paheadstart.org](http://www.paheadstart.org)
  - Childcare Information Services (CCIS) [www.dhs.pa.gov](http://www.dhs.pa.gov)

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Assessing Customer Skills and Job Readiness (8 of 14)



**Criminal Record Issues**

- Criminal history questions may be asked on applications and in interviews
- Customer needs to know their criminal record status
- May need to disclose information about criminal history and do it well
- Most employers run background checks when making a hiring decision

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Assessing Customer Skills and Job Readiness (10 of 14)



**Criminal Record Checks**


- Background checks available at:
  - [PA Common Pleas Courts Docket Sheets](#) (FREE)
    - <http://ujportal.pacourts.us/DocketSheets/CP.aspx>
  - [PA Access to Criminal History](#) (PATCH) (\$20)
    - <https://epatch.state.pa.us/Home.jsp>
  - [Justifacts: www.justifacts.com](#) (about \$30)
    - Useful if the customer lived in other states

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Assessing Customer Skills and Job Readiness (10 of 14)



**Disability Disclosure**

**Yep, It can be a barrier if not done correctly!**

- In accordance to the ADAAA, a customer is not required to disclose their disability.
- However, it may be necessary to disclose if:
  - an accommodation is needed to apply for and/or perform the job
  - to help set the employer at ease & to inform them of capabilities
  - if the customer is applying for job in an affirmative disability hiring program
    - an employee with a disability may be terminated for poor work performance
- Disability disclosure can be done at any time:
  - Must know when to best disclose accommodation needs
 

* Time of application	* At time of job offer
* For the interview	* After work has started

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### **How to Disclose**

- Provide general information about the disability concluding with ability to perform the job.
- Discuss need to disclose their disability, including its potential impact on job performance.
- Anticipate needed accommodations with respect to current job or the one for which they are applying.
- List accommodations that worked in the past (AT, LV Aids, etc.).
- Be able to discuss how the disability and other life experiences can positively affect work performance.

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### **Tips for Describing Disability**

- Avoid medical terminology & words like chronic or debilitating
  - Use general terms: disability, medical condition, illness.
  - Can be more specific but still vague: a biological disorder, a neurological problem, a brain disorder, difficulty with stress.
  - Avoid the exact diagnosis: RP, diabetic retinopathy, ROP, etc.
- The employer only needs to know there is a need for a job accommodation.

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### **Describing Disability**

- Be brief and matter-of-fact when describing disability.
  - Don't present the disability as a weakness or apologize for it.
  - Focus on any positive effects it may have on performance of essential job functions.
- In the case of disabilities with unpredictable symptoms, such as diabetes or epilepsy, consider describing behaviors that may be exhibited, & any steps the employer should take in response.
- Disclose only to those who have a need to know.


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### **Practice Disclosing**

- Careful planning should be used to disclose disability.
- Practice in advance.

"I have a medical condition that sometimes interferes with my ability to \_\_\_\_\_. In a previous position, I found that \_\_\_\_\_ helped to minimize my problems in this area. I would like to discuss implementing a similar workplace accommodation here. I am confident that my experience, skills, and enthusiasm will enable me to successfully perform the position of \_\_\_\_\_. I look forward to proving myself as a valuable member of your work team."

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# Effective Job Search Strategies & Resources

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## The Job Search

- Who are the big employers in your region?
  - PA Work Stats website  
<http://www.workstats.dli.pa.gov/Pages/ProductsAtoZ.aspx>
  - Look for the Top 50 Employers & Industries
- Job Boards
  - Indeed.com-most comprehensive updated jobs
  - Monster.com-
    - For both of the above, you can post your resumes for employers to find
- Federal Employment <https://www.usajobs.gov>
  - Create a profile, post your resume(s), search for jobs
  - Schedule A Letter

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Job Search Websites




- Career Link uses [www.pacareerlink.pa.gov](http://www.pacareerlink.pa.gov)
  - Can search for jobs and post your resume
  - Open to ANY job seeker
- PA Employment [www.employment.pa.gov](http://www.employment.pa.gov)
  - Search for both Civil Service & Non-Civil Services jobs
- Talent Acquisition Portal (TAP)-National job search portal
  - Open ONLY to people with disabilities connected to state VR.
  - Invite only system, your VRC needs to invite you to TAP
  - You can post your resume for employers to find and search for jobs nationally
  - Your VRC can go in, search for and "Star" jobs for you to apply
  - Virtual Hiring Events

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Applications




- Applications are designed to screen out applicants.
- Be prepared to apply in-person, using both paper or on-line formats.
- Read & follow directions.
- Beat neat, positive, honest and complete.
- Emphasize positive achievements and qualifications.
- Create a positive response for problem questions and issues.
- Complete a sample application as a reference tool.

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Resumes




- The goal is to get a job interview!
- Tailor your resume to match the job description essential functions
  - Don't make things up, match up to their Key Words
- Use the best resume style to fit you
  - Chronological-traditional
  - Functional
  - Combination
  - Electronic

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Chronological



- Clear picture of work history and experience
- Logical format and easy to read
- Emphasizes a solid work history
- Best used for staying in the same field of work

WEAKNESSES


- Draws attention to gaps in employment
- Highlights lack of experience for those with a limited work history or when changing fields
- Focuses more on work history rather than marketable skills

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Functional



- Works well for those who have been out of the workforce (parent, homemaker)
- Highlights acquired and transferable skills
- De-emphasizes limited, or interrupted work history
- Does not focus on the duration or number of jobs held

WEAKNESSES


- Lack of employer recognition of functional format
- Employer suspicion of lack of dates and former employer names & locations
- Confusing to read if document is not well-organized

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Combination



- Best when changing fields or re-entering job market
- More accepted alternative format
- Same strengths as functional format


WEAKNESSES

- Ineffective unless very well-organized
- Shows gaps in employment or lack of work history

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- Easily scanned or transmitted through e-mail or employer website, typically read/scanned by a computer
- Length of document not an issue
- Highlights use of “Keywords” rather than work history

**WEAKNESSES**


- Specific formatting must be used or document may be rejected (Typically PDF/HTML)
- Traditional resume must be re-written to focus on use of “Keywords”
- Does not replace traditional resume

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## Soft Skills



**Soft Skills - “People Skills” “Social Skills”**

- Set of skills and behaviors that are necessary for **EVERY JOB**
  - Helps you function successfully, individually and within a group
  - Allows you to: communicate with coworkers, solve problems, understand your role within a team, make responsible choices, display appropriateness
  - Most valued in today’s workforce! Hard to teach.
- Your hard skills (education and work experience) will get you the interview, but ...

**You need soft skills to get - and keep – a job.**

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Social Media


## Watch What You Post on Social Media

Recruiters are looking.

Proactively manage your online presence. Recruiters and employers are increasingly looking to social media as they vet job candidates. You might need to do more than just hide those incriminating spring break photos.



### Social Media Matters

55% of recruiters have reconsidered candidates based on their social profiles, with 61% of those reconsiderations being negative.

The number of recruiters and companies using social media is steadily on the rise.



Year	Percentage
2010	82%
2012	92%
2014	93%

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Social Media

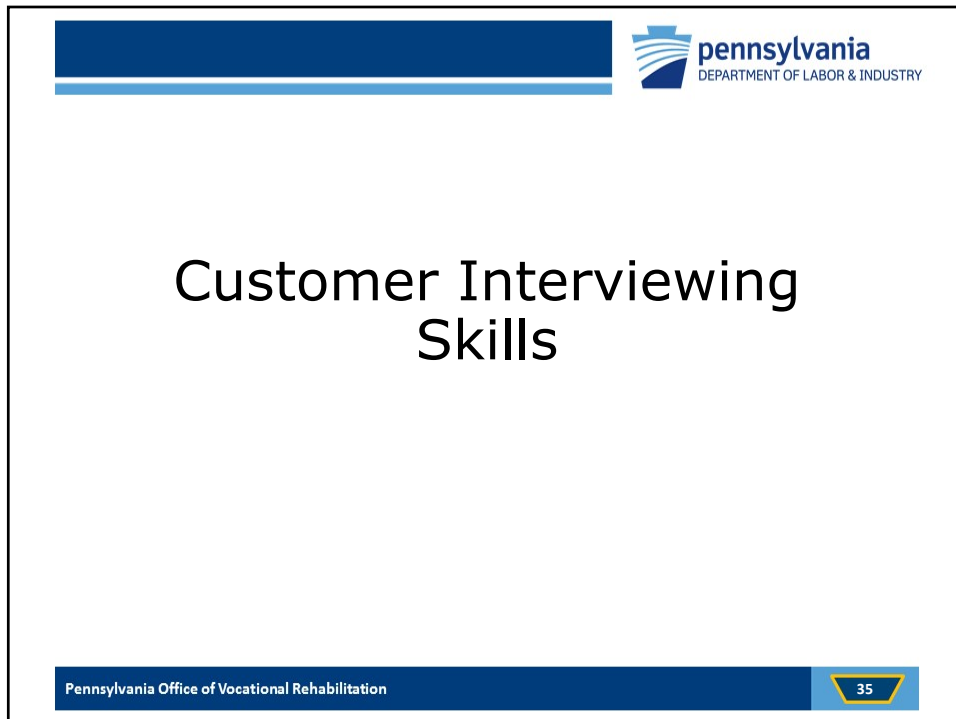

## 10 Things you should never post on social media!

1. Profanity
2. Abusive Content
3. "Adult" Content
4. Illegal Content
6. Negative opinions about your job / employer / boss / professor
7. Drug related content
8. Poor grammar
9. Poor spelling
10. Threats



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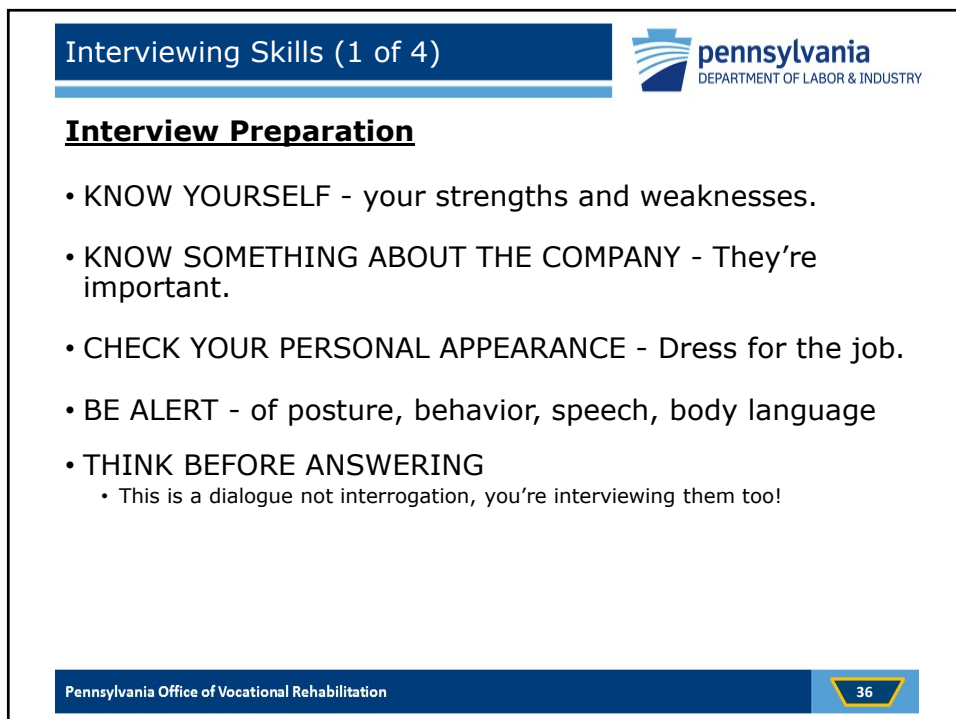
The slide features a blue header bar with the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry logo on the right. The main content area is white with the title 'Customer Interviewing Skills' centered in a large, black, sans-serif font. A blue footer bar at the bottom contains the text 'Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation' on the left and a yellow trapezoidal shape with the number '35' on the right.

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# Customer Interviewing Skills

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The slide features a blue header bar with the text 'Interviewing Skills (1 of 4)' on the left and the Pennsylvania Department of Labor & Industry logo on the right. The main content area is white with the title 'Interview Preparation' in bold, underlined, black font. Below the title is a bulleted list of five points. A blue footer bar at the bottom contains the text 'Pennsylvania Office of Vocational Rehabilitation' on the left and a yellow trapezoidal shape with the number '36' on the right.

**Interviewing Skills (1 of 4)**

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## **Interview Preparation**

- KNOW YOURSELF - your strengths and weaknesses.
- KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT THE COMPANY - They're important.
- CHECK YOUR PERSONAL APPEARANCE - Dress for the job.
- BE ALERT - of posture, behavior, speech, body language
- THINK BEFORE ANSWERING
  - This is a dialogue not interrogation, you're interviewing them too!

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## Interviewing Skills (2 of 4)



- BE PLEASANT TO ALL
- DON'T FIDGET OR PLAY ON YOUR PHONE OR ELECTRONICS
- PREPARE FOR SCENARIO OR BEHAVIORAL-BASED QUESTIONS
  - Use the **STAR** method to keep focused:
    - **S**ituation/**T**ask
    - **A**ction you took
    - **R**esult of your action
- THANK THE INTERVIEWER-
  - Get a business card so you can send a thank you note or e-mail

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## Interviewing Skills (3 of 4)




### Behavioral Based Interview

- Provide employer examples of PAST PERFORMANCE that demonstrate you possess work characteristics they are looking for.
  - Understand what is really being asked
  - Answer the question briefly
  - Answer the real question by presenting your related skills and strengths.
- **"Tell me about** a difficult situation with a customer or coworker and how you handled it."
- **"How have you** gone above and beyond to get the job done?"
- **"Describe a time when** you were faced with a stressful situation and what the result was."

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Interviewing Skills (4 of 4)



**DO**

- Make certain personal appearance is appropriate
- Speak confidently and with proper loudness
- Listen attentively to the interviewer
- Use proper grammar, no street slang
- Focus on strengths that are related to the position
- Answer questions fully
- Present an enthusiastic attitude
- Research the company and be ready to talk about it
- Be prepared to answer questions about the resume
- Arrive early
- Thank the interviewer
- Ask questions
- Use business language & terminology

**DON'T**

- Speak badly about former boss
- Talk about finances and wages until you receive the offer (if the interviewer press on this issue, give a salary range)
- Chew gum
- Use electronic cigarettes
- Exaggerate abilities
- Plead for the job
- Use foul language
- Have cell phone ring or answer

**• Don't focus on your disability and medical issues.**

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Achieve Goals



**You** become more knowledgeable about placement and business services.

**Customers** are prepared for job search and integrated competitive work.

**Business** is connected and satisfied with qualified employees.

**You** helped to link these essential components together.


That's how you **get people jobs!**

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**FINAL QUESTIONS?**



**QUESTIONS?**



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