

Who Gets Jobs?

The **BIG** Idea

- What are the best methods for finding satisfying work?

AGENDA

Approx. 45 minutes

- I. Warm Up: Ranking Job-Hunting Techniques (5 minutes)
- II. 14 Ways to Look for a Job (20 minutes)
- III. Setting a Job Goal (10 minutes)
- IV. Wrap Up: Sharing and Critiquing Job Goals (10 minutes)

MATERIALS

STUDENT HANDBOOK PAGES:

- Student Handbook page 38, Job Hunting 101
- Student Handbook page 39, Job-Hunting Techniques Pros & Cons Chart
- Student Handbook page 40, My Job Goal

FACILITATOR PAGES:

- Facilitator Resource 1, Richard Bolles' Analysis of Job-Hunting Techniques
- Facilitator Resource 2, Job Goal Question Prompts

- Overhead projector

OBJECTIVES

During this lesson, the student(s) will:

- Be aware of various job-hunting techniques, and the success rate of each, including networking, cold calling, responding to print and online ads, posting resumes to job websites, and mass mailings.
- Distinguish between a passive and active job search, recognizing which is more effective and why.
- Identify a personal job-hunting goal.

OVERVIEW

The lesson begins with students ranking job-hunting techniques based on their success rate. Students compare their own assessments with research analyzed by career expert Richard Bolles. Next, students work in pairs to identify pros and cons for two job search techniques and share their findings with the class. Then, students assess sample job-hunting goals, using what they learn to write their own. Finally, students share their goals, and evaluate their classmates' goals.

PREPARATION

- List the day's **BIG IDEA** and activities on the board.
- The following handouts need to be made into overhead transparencies or copied onto chart paper:
 - **Student Handbook page 39, Job-Hunting Techniques Pros & Cons Chart**
 - **Student Handbook page 40, My Job Goal**
 - **Facilitator Resource 1, Richard Bolles' Analysis of Job-Hunting Techniques**
 - **Facilitator Resource 2, Job Goal Question Prompts**
- For **Activities II** and **III**, decide in advance how you want to have student form pairs and teams of four.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

How many jobs will a worker have in a lifetime? How many distinct careers? The Bureau of Labor Statistics won't even hazard a guess, citing two problems in collecting this kind of data: 1) The need for information that spans the length of a person's time in the workforce and 2) Difficulty determining what constitutes a career change. Richard Bolles, author of the bestseller, *What Color is Your Parachute? A Practical Manual for Job Hunters and Career Changers*, estimates that most people switch jobs five to nine times, and change careers two to three times. In any case, the general trend is toward greater career flexibility and mobility compared with previous generations.

Having the skills necessary to effectively search for jobs has become a critical skill in the 21st Century. However, most people lack basic knowledge in this area. They fall into the pattern of using a single strategy (e.g., mass mailings), even when that strategy is not producing results.

Bolles explains that to get results, you must be willing to use multiple strategies and change strategies when they are not working. He also points to evidence that strategies that require more work (e.g., networking, knocking on doors) lead to higher success rates than passive strategies (e.g., posting your resume online and waiting for a response).

At one time, being willing and able to work was enough to land a job. Today, however, a successful job search requires considerable effort. In addition to having marketable skills, job seekers must be able to sell themselves. Fortunately, these are skills people can learn, and come back to again and again during their working years.

Sources:

“The Three Secrets of Successful Job Hunting.” Richard Bolles, http://www.jobdig.com/articles/396/The_three_secrets_of_successful_job-hunting_.html

Minnesota’s Department of Employment and Education Development <http://www.deed.state.mn.us/cjs/cjsbook/intro.htm>

IMPLEMENTATION OPTIONS

For **Warm Up**, you may prefer to present **Student Handbook page 38, Job Hunting 101** as a Do Now, and follow up with the introduction described in the **Warm Up**.

For **Activity II, 14 Ways to Look for a Job**, you may ask students to list all the job-hunting strategies they know before presenting **Facilitator Resource 1, Richard Bolles’ Analysis of Job-Hunting Techniques**. If time is limited, do not have students return to the Do Now activity to fix their rankings. A discussion based on the question prompts is sufficient.

(Note: re: Item 12 in **Facilitator Resource 1:** As internet research replaces the use of the phone book, many of your students may be unfamiliar with the Yellow Pages. Key points that make the Yellow Pages an effective research tool: 1) It lists local businesses and 2) it’s organized by category. Students who prefer researching online can use these websites to find business listings: local.google.com, superpages.co, and yellowpages.com.)

Also for **Activity II**, you may do the pro/cons chart as a whole class activity if you believe that partners will not be able to identify pros and cons on their own.

ACTIVITY STEPS

I. Warm Up: Ranking Job Hunting Techniques (5 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** How many of you plan to enter the workforce full time after graduation? How many expect to get a job this summer? For the next nine lessons, we're going to prepare for the job search experience. We'll create the tools you need for job hunting, such as an updated resume and cover letter, and we will share the wisdom of experts on the best methods for finding work.
2. [Have students open to **Student Handbook page 38, Job Hunting 101**. Invite a volunteer to read aloud the instructions. Then call their attention to the questions about which methods they ranked as most and least effective and why.]

II. 14 Ways to Look for a Job (20 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Research on job-hunting strategies, like the ones you just ranked, reveal that some produce more successful results than others. Richard Bolles, career-hunting expert and author of the ultimate job searching guidebook, has studied the various methods and has insights into their effectiveness, which we'll discuss today. Many adult job hunters are unaware of this information, so having this knowledge should give you an advantage when looking for work.
2. [Display **Facilitator Resource 1, Richard Bolles' Analysis of Job-Hunting Techniques**. Point out the success rates, in percentages, next to each technique.]
3. [When students finish reading, instruct them to return to **Student Handbook page 38, Job Hunting 101**.]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: How do the success rates listed here compare with your rankings on **Student Handbook page 38, Job Hunting 101**? Did you think certain techniques were more effective than they actually are? Explain.

[After students respond to the questions, have them correct their answers, and reorder the rankings on **Student Handbook page 38, Job Hunting 101**].

4. [Display **Student Handbook page 39, Job-Hunting Techniques Pros & Cons Chart** on an overhead projector]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Now that we know what the research says, let's figure out why some job-hunting methods are more effective than others.

For example, let's consider the popular method of posting your resume on a job-posting web site. What are the advantages of this method? [Students responses might include, "don't have to ask anybody for anything" or "does not take too much time."]

[Write student suggestions on the "pro" side of the chart.]

What are the disadvantages? [Students responses may include, "no idea if anybody's looked at your resume" and "no control over follow-up."]

Because it's so easy to do, you are probably competing with thousands of others who are using the same technique, making the chances of an employer even looking at your resume very slim. [Write suggested disadvantages on the "con" side of the chart.]

5. [Divide the class into pairs, and assign each pair two techniques from Bolles' list to evaluate. Have students open to **Student Handbook page 39, Job-Hunting Techniques Pros & Cons Chart** to record their ideas. Invite pairs to share their charts with the class.]
6. [Display **Facilitator Resource 1, Richard Bolles' Analysis of Job-Hunting Techniques** on the overhead projector. Have a volunteer read aloud Bolles' analysis.]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: You've heard the saying "There is no such thing as a free lunch." Well that is certainly true with job hunting. As Bolles points out, the effectiveness rate for each method is directly connected to how much work the method requires. Who can give an example that illustrates this?

There is also the second point about using more than one strategy at a time. This does not mean the more you use, the better. As Bolles notes here, using two to four methods is best. More than four means you are not giving enough time and attention to any one of the methods.

III. Setting a Job Goal (10 minutes)

1. [Display **Student Handbook page 40, My Job Goal** on the overhead projector.]

SAY SOMETHING LIKE: Let's take a look at how we translate this information into action. Now that we know the most effective job hunts involve interaction with other people, we have to figure out a way to describe to others what we want in a job. The more focused and specific your goals, the more people can help you find the kind of job you want.

Imagine you are interested in a job working with animals. When you reach out to people in your network they can put you in touch with vets or other animal care workers they know, which could possibly lead to a job. However, if you simply tell these people that you are interested in any kind of job, they wouldn't have a clue as to how to help you or who to put you in touch with. Having a goal, then, is helpful to you and to those who are helping you.

2. [Have students open to **Student Handbook page 40, My Job Goal** and as a class, have them identify which of the sample job goals have a focus. Remind them that the more focused the goal, the more effective the job search. After they finish, have the class discuss which goals they checked and why. Now have students select one of the job seekers they checked, and describe places the job-seeker could look for work.]
3. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Now think about your own job goal. Be as specific as you can as you respond to the third prompt on the page. If you are attending college next year, your goal may concern a summer job or a job you hope to get after college. Then brainstorm places you might look for work and list them under question #3.

IV. Wrap Up: Sharing and Critiquing Job Goals (10 minutes)

1. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** In this wrap up activity, you will work in small groups to evaluate your job goals and suggest places where each job-hunter might look for work. Your team members will provide feedback that will help you refine and focus your goal, and you will do the same for them. Please provide feedback by stating one positive thing and one thing that could be improved. So, in the example of the student who wants to make \$500 a week, you might say, "Mentioning that you want to make \$500 a week rules out certain minimum wage jobs. But it doesn't give any idea of your interests."

One way to evaluate your goals is to figure out if they're SMART.

[Ask students to recall the attributes of SMART goals as taught in previous years, and list them on the board:

S = Specific (detailed, not general or vague)

M = Measurable (includes some quantity or element that can be measured)

A = Attainable (ambitious but reasonable; may break large goals into smaller ones)

R = Realistic (person is willing and able to do the work involved with this goal)

T = Timed (establishes a time frame for accomplishing the goal)

Provide further examples as needed:

- I would like a part-time job tutoring children in reading after school, starting in June.
 - I would like a full-time job, starting in October, assisting a mechanic.
 - I would like a Monday-Friday, 9-5 job as an administrative assistant starting in September.]
2. [Project **Facilitator Resource 2, Job Goal Question Prompts** on the overhead. Tell students to consider these questions as they prepare to give feedback.]
 3. **SAY SOMETHING LIKE:** Good job today! Knowing the effectiveness of different job hunting techniques will be helpful to you now and for your entire working career. Recognizing the power of having a clear and focused job goal will also come in handy now and during career changes. In the more immediate future, you will use what you learned today about job search techniques in the remaining lessons in this unit.
 4. [Spend the last couple of minutes previewing the rest of the unit, including the topics you will cover: expanding and using your network to find a job, researching companies in your field of interest, updating your resume, writing powerful cover letters, preparing for an interview, and following up on interviews and possible job leads. Explain to students that by the end of the unit, they will be expert job hunters, who can identify their job goals and know how and where to find jobs.]

Richard Bolles' Analysis of Job Hunting Techniques:

The 14 Ways to Look for a Job

Richard Bolles is a big authority on job-hunting. His famous book, What Color is Your Parachute? A Practical Manual for Job-Hunters and Career-Changers, was first printed more than 30 years ago. Over 10 million copies have been sold, and the book has been translated in 20 languages. It is revised each year. The U.S. Library of Congress has named it one of 25 books that shaped readers' lives. For more of Richard Bolles' tips, visit www.jobhuntersbible.com.

Here are his 14 ways to look for a job, and the success rate for each:

1. Using the Internet to look for job-postings or to post one's own resume (1%)
2. Mailing out resumes to employers at random (7%)
3. Answering ads in professional or trade journals appropriate to your field (7%)
4. Answering local newspaper ads (5-24% depending on salary demands)
5. Going to private employment agencies or search firms (5-24% depending on salary demands)
6. Going to places where employers come to pick out workers, such as union hiring halls (8%)
7. Taking a Civil Service exam (12%)
8. Asking a former teacher or professor for job-leads (12%)
9. Going to the state/Federal employment service office (14%)
10. Asking family members, friends, or professionals you know for job-leads (33%)
11. Knocking on the door of any employer, factory, or office that interests you, whether they are known to have a vacancy or not (47%)
12. By yourself, using the phone book's Yellow Pages to identify fields that interest you, then calling employers in those fields to see if they're hiring for the kind of work you can do (69%)
13. In a group with other job-hunters, using the phone book's Yellow Pages as above (84%)
14. Doing what is called "the creative approach to job-hunting or career-change": doing homework on yourself, to figure out what your favorite and best skills are; then doing face-to-face interviewing for information only, at organizations in your field; followed up by using your personal contacts to get in to see, at each organization that has interested you, the person-who-actually-has-the-power-to-hire-you (not necessarily the human resources department) (86%)

Richard Bolles' Analysis of Job-Hunting Methods

- The easier a job-hunting method is, the less likely it is to work.
- For best results, use two to four of these methods at a time.

SOURCE: http://www.jobhuntersbible.com/articles/article.php?art_item=024
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Job Goal Question Prompts

- Is [classmate's] goal clear and specific? How might it be improved?
- How might [classmate] expand on places to find work?

1. _____

2. _____

Job Hunting 101

1. Here are five common job-hunting methods. Rank them in order of most effective to least. Write “1” beside the top-ranked method, a “2” beside the next-best method, and so on down to a “5” beside the lowest-ranked method.

- ___ Answering ads in the newspaper

- ___ Posting to online job sites

- ___ Calling companies in the phone book to find out who’s hiring

- ___ Asking friends, family, and professionals for job leads

- ___ Sending resumes to all companies in your field, whether they’re hiring or not

2. Choose your top-ranked job-hunting method and explain why you think it would work.

3. Choose your lowest-ranked job-hunting method and explain why you think it would not work.

Job-Hunting Techniques Pros & Cons Chart

Record the names of the two techniques you were assigned in the first column. Then think about each job-hunting technique, and list the pros and cons of each.

| Job-Hunting Technique | Pros | Cons |
|-----------------------|------|------|
| | | |
| Job-Hunting Technique | Pros | Cons |
| | | |

My Job Goal

1. Successful job hunts begin with a focused goal. Having a clear goal makes it possible for people to help you. Put a check beside each goal that has a focus.

- JOE: To find a job as soon as possible
- MARCUS: To learn everything I can about the restaurant business
- SARABETH: To spend every waking minute with animals
- CHRIS: To work during the day so I can take care of my siblings after school
- JENNA: To make at least \$500 a week

2. Choose one of the job seekers above and suggest where he or she might look for work

Example: Sarabeth could look for a job at a veterinarian's office or at a local nature center.

Name of student: _____

Places to look for work:

- _____
- _____
- _____

3. Now write your own goal, and describe where you might look for work. (NOTE: If you'll be attending college next year, your goal may describe a summer job or a job you hope to get after college.)

My goal: _____

Places to look for work:

- _____
- _____
- _____