

**Topic: Employment**  
(Original plan developed by August 2010 Community Orientation Skills Development Workshop participants in Portland, OR, and further developed by the Cultural Orientation Resource Center)

**Activity: Getting Your First Job**

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<b>Objective</b>	Participants will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>✓ identify why economic self-sufficiency is important in the United States</li><li>✓ explain the benefits of taking the first job offered and working in the United States</li><li>✓ identify some potential jobs which may be their first</li></ul>
<b>Lesson Time</b>	15-20 minutes Within the first few days of arrival
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Pictures of entry-level jobs (see samples included)</li></ul>
<b>Introduction</b>	Economic stability is very important in the United States. This allows you and your family to be independent, have health benefits, and to consider how you would like to improve your life. That is why it is important to take the first job you are offered. Your first job in the United States will not be your last, but will help you build references, a work history, and employment experience in the United States. Therefore any job will improve your situation, and the benefits received from working far outweigh cash or public assistance.
<b>Discussion Questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do you feel about working?</li><li>• What kind of job would you like to have?</li><li>• How do you feel about holding a position that is not your ideal job?</li><li>• Why is working in the United States important and beneficial?</li></ul>
<b>Practice</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Show participants pictures of typical entry-level jobs refugees in your area have gotten (housekeeping, busboy, factory work, cooking, caring for young children or elderly, etc.). Based on these pictures and participant knowledge, ask participants to identify jobs they would take and jobs they would not take.</li><li>2. Lead a discussion about why participants would not take some jobs, and ask participants to again identify the benefits of taking <u>any</u> job over no job at all. Try to encourage participants to consider the consequences of not taking the jobs they say they would not accept.</li></ol>
<b>Cultural Notes</b>	Explain the benefits of working, but try not to scare participants who may not be able to find work immediately.  Be aware that there may be tensions regarding different family members working.
<b>Evaluation</b>	Keep in mind that this activity plan is planting the seed, and attitude changes toward jobs and employment may take days, weeks, months, or years, and are often based on personal experiences and the experiences of others. The best indication of success for this session will be refugees accepting employment they may not otherwise have considered, which may occur in the long term.

## Variations

1. Give brief description of entry-level position duties.
2. Give examples of refugees who stuck with unwanted jobs to their benefit: health benefits, recommendations for better positions or jobs, earning raises, etc.
3. Use case studies and critical incidents to get the point across. Samples are available in the Domestic Service Providers Toolkit on the Cultural Orientation Resource Center website (<http://www.cal.org/co/domestic/toolkit/employment/index.html>), such as:
  - a. Employment Expectations and Goals:  
[http://www.cal.org/co/domestic/toolkit/employment/employment-Expectations-and-Goals.doc](http://www.cal.org/co/domestic/toolkit/employment/employment/employment-Expectations-and-Goals.doc)
  - b. The Employment Search for a Bhutanese Refugee:  
[http://www.cal.org/co/domestic/toolkit/employment/An\\_Employment\\_Search\\_Case\\_Study.doc](http://www.cal.org/co/domestic/toolkit/employment/An_Employment_Search_Case_Study.doc)
  - c. Disadvantages and Advantages in the Job Search:  
[http://www.cal.org/co/domestic/toolkit/employment/employment-Disadvantages-and-Advantages-in-the-Job-Search.doc](http://www.cal.org/co/domestic/toolkit/employment/employment/employment-Disadvantages-and-Advantages-in-the-Job-Search.doc)
  - d. Employment and Professional Status:  
[http://www.cal.org/co/domestic/toolkit/employment/employment-Professional-Status-Cl-for-Refugees.doc](http://www.cal.org/co/domestic/toolkit/employment/employment/employment-Professional-Status-Cl-for-Refugees.doc)
  - e. Job Types and Job Searches:  
[http://www.cal.org/co/domestic/toolkit/employment/employment-Job-Types-&-Searches-Critical-Incident-for-Refugees.doc](http://www.cal.org/co/domestic/toolkit/employment/employment/employment-Job-Types-&-Searches-Critical-Incident-for-Refugees.doc)
  - f. Transportation Decisions in Employment:  
[http://www.cal.org/co/domestic/toolkit/employment/employment-Transportation-Decisions-in-Employment-Critical-Incident-for-Refugees.doc](http://www.cal.org/co/domestic/toolkit/employment/employment/employment-Transportation-Decisions-in-Employment-Critical-Incident-for-Refugees.doc)
4. Share the information provided and activity administered with other service providers so they can build upon this information in future orientation and training sessions.

Sample Pictures of Entry-Level Jobs



