

# PROBLEM-SOLVING FOR EMPLOYMENT BARRIERS

## GOALS:

- To identify potential barriers to employment
- To effectively deal with these barriers

## RATIONALE:

Although a person may seem to have all the skills needed to perform a job, any real or perceived barriers may nevertheless jeopardize a person's chances of landing the job. It makes sense to think ahead and identify any potential barriers to employment so that we are in a better position to deal with the judgments that potential employers may make during the interview process.

**Note:** A knowledge of problem-solving is required (See **Solving Problems on the Job**).

## MATERIALS NEEDED:

Magazine pictures depicting people having visible job "barriers"; for each participant a copy of *Scenarios for Barriers*

## METHOD:

### Exercise 1: Visible Barriers

Distribute pictures to group and ask:

**"What barriers would these people face when looking for work?"**

Discuss as large group.

### Exercise 2: Identifying Barriers

Divide group into smaller groups. Have each group brainstorm and record potential barriers to employment. Examples include: age, too old/young, weight, appearance, race, disability, gender, criminal record, lack of education or experience, competitive job market, lack of jobs, fears.) Discuss these barriers as a group.

Questions to consider:

- Which are myths?
- Which are realities?

**Note:** We need to use our problem-solving skills to get around these barriers.

**Exercise 3: How Can Negatives Be Turned Into Positives?**

Distribute ***Scenarios for Barriers*** handout. Divide participants into three groups and assign each group one of the scenarios listed on the handout. Tell each group to read their scenario and, using problem-solving skills, generate ideas about how each "applicant" can best approach the interview. Discuss each scenario and the related ideas as a large group.

Questions to consider:

- What employment barriers do you need to overcome?
- What can you say or do to deal with these barriers?

**EVALUATION:**

**CREDIT:**

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